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Mrs. BUTLER

A N N A ;

O R

M E M O I R S

O F A

W E L C H H E I R E S S .

V O L . II.

A I I A ; A

И. П. В. И.

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A N N A ;

O R

M E M O I R S

O F A

WELCH HEIRESS.

INTERSPERSED WITH

A N E C D O T E S

O F A

N A B O B.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

V O L. II.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

D U B L I N :

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M.DCC.LXXXVI.



A N N A.

C H A P. XLVII.

A new Acquaintance.

MR. Wellers brought home to dinner with him, Mr. Bently—Mr. Wellers, when he laid aside his religious fits (and that was as often as he had chearful company) was a good-hearted old man, who was too much wrapt up in his wife not to respect her guest: Bently, Anna had never seen, though both gentlemen had heard sufficiently of so bad a woman being at Layton. The chearful meal past with that mutual satisfaction, peace in the breast, and plenty on the board, may be supposed to inspire.

As soon as dinner was over, Anna rose to be gone; when Mr. Bently, taking hold of her struggling hand, advised her not to attempt walking by herself. Alarmed, she begged to know what she had to fear? “Fear, sweet maid,” answered he; “why your dangers are so manifold I can hardly repeat them all: in the first place, here is old Roger Bently, a hale widower of seventy-three, finds himself strangely tempted to run away with you; then you are convicted on the evidence of the envy of the women, and the admiration of

VOL. II. B “ the

“ the men, of the high crime of beauty, and the
“ monstrous phenomenon of humility and mo-
“ desty ; the first they cannot take from you, but
“ the two last they will contrive so to disfigure,
“ you will not yourself know them to be your
“ own ; and lastly,” continued he, lowering his
voice, “ there is a certain handsome libertine, of
“ horse-whipping memory, whose violence, more
“ pleasing, is consequently more dangerous than
“ all.”

Anna had no idea this was the person on whom Edwin had wrecked his disappointment and ill humour ; her surprise at his odd accostment was not so great as at that discovery ; Mrs. Wellers, laughing, said, then if the fair damsel was in such danger, it would be quite in his way to stand forth the champion of innocence—“ Is she really innocent,” demanded Bently with a significant earnestness.

“ You see the company she is in,” said Mrs. Wellers.

Bently felt the reproof, and getting up, striking his oaken towel (without which he never now ventured out) hard on the ground, told her he would be her champion and her friend as long, and no longer than she deserved it.—This rough kindness alarmed Anna so much, that she was not capable of making him any answer, nor did she find herself much easier by his resolution of walking home with her.—Mrs. Wellers, who knew the goodness of Mr. Bently’s heart (which under the appearance of misanthropy and obstinate positiveness, veiled a sensibility which was often painful to himself, and a generosity that was felt by every individual he could assist, without being hurt by their grateful acknowledgments) was rejoiced at the favourable impression she saw he had received of our heroine ; and willing to increase a partiality

ality so visible, said they could all walk home with her: "but come, Miss Mansel," said she, "You shall give Mr. Bently a song." Our heroine was too sensible of her friend's kind intentions towards her, to hesitate at complying with her request; though very much against her inclinations in the present instance; she sung therefore, Linley's

"Alas! from the day my poor heart."

Bently's eyes bore witness to the pathos of the words, and the melody of the voice transported him out of himself—"Do take notice, madam Wellers," said he, half sobbing, "I will have no more of this girl's songs; I did not promise to make a fool of myself; but I suppose you understand music; do you play, Miss?"—"When she can get an instrument," said Mrs. Wellers—A nod from Bently was all his answer.

They set out for the village in high good humour, Bently insisting on Anna's leaning on his arm, and were as cordially received by Dalton and his family, whose assiduities with respect to our heroine were equally new and unaccountable—Mrs. Dalton blamed her for walking in the heat, and for alarming them by her long absence—She was Peggy's dear Miss Mansel; and their obligations to Mrs. Wellers, for her kindness, were endless.

Bently, whose religion consisted in the mere private practice of a particular kind of love to his fellow creatures, without ever entering the door of a church or meeting, except Easter, Whitsun, and Christmas days, held Dalton and all his sect (his friend Wellers only excepted) in contempt and dislike, while that good man looked on Bently with abhorrence, as a reviler of religion, a prophaner of the sabbath (as he actually more than once had suf-

ferred some young people he had invited to his house to strike up a dance in his hall after tea, on a Sunday evening,) and an outcast of heaven.

Few civilities were likely to take place between two people so opposite in their inclinations to each other; Mr. Bently hardly sat down; he staid only to bid Anna be sure to seek a friend at the Abbey—Mrs. Wellers was as little disposed to prolong her stay; they were therefore soon at liberty to open to their ward the splendid fortune that awaited her acceptance.

C H A P. XLVIII.

The Rejection.

AS Anna knew nothing of the friendly alliance entered into, between the right honourable Lord Patrick Sutton, and the reverend John Dalton, her surprise was not more excited by the matter, which gave them such evident pleasure, than at the manner of such a proposal's being made; but while her whole heart rejected, with antipathy and contempt, the most distant idea of such an union, she had her doubts of its being seriously intended by Lord Sutton. Perfect master of dissimulation she knew him to be; once her bitter enemy, and ever the object of her dislike, which she was at no pains to conceal, was it likely he could mean to unite himself to her?—some mystery, she could not help thinking, lay under this astonishing appearance, and as coming from him, could mean her no good.

Mrs. Dalton was amazed such great fortune had not the power of transporting her; she assured her
over

over and over it was true, that she would certainly be a great lady ; hoped she would get Mr. Dalton a living ; take Peggy to wait on her, and Billy a place ; Jackey in the excise ; and Polly, Sally, and Jenny, into something or other ; those assurances, and those expectations, were echoed by all present : she interrupted not the volubility that appeared to have taken possession of the family ; but reserved her sentiments for the event, as she was bid to expect the avowal of that great and good man's affection the next day : the evening passed in the utmost harmony ; a bottle of Mrs. Dalton's best currant wine added to their hilarity, and they retired to dream of livings and fat capons.

Before the family were assembled to breakfast next morning, a servant arrived with the following letter :

TO MISS MANSEL.

“ MADAM,

“ Were not those sentiments of tenderness I feel for you founded on an unfurmountable regard and long-cherished attachment, more ceremony might be requisite on their avowal : I have told Mr. Dalton my intentions of settling on you a handsome allowance, and making you Lady Sutton ; you are too prudent not to be sensible I must forego many advantages in this disposal of my name and fortune ; but my reliance is on that, and the gratitude of your disposition, which, together with my great love of your person, outbalances every argument of interest and ambition.

“ I wish the matter concluded immediately ; Mr. Dalton may inspect the writing, and I will follow this note if (which I think cannot be doubted) your answer be propitious ; till when,

I am, my lovely girl,

your devoted

SUTTON.”

While Anna was perusing this proud offer, the Daltons were impatient to see, to congratulate her and themselves, to speak confirmation of their own hopes, and to assist in raising hers ; they were seized with wonder at her stay above stairs ; the servant was very courteously asked to walk in and sit down, and divers questions asked about his good Lord. At length Mrs. Dalton's impatience carried her up stairs, she found our heroine in the act of sealing a letter, which, with great composure, she directed to Lord Sutton, and then accompanied her down. The person who brought the letter, was the great man's great man, viz. his servant out of livery, and the same on whose sagacity his Lordship depended so much, at the time he was so good as to send our young heroine into the world for experience. He was vaunting his own importance to the gaping Dalton and his simpering daughter, when Mrs. Dalton entered, followed by Anna, the good creature not forming an idea a Lord could be rejected, still running on in her castle-building provision for her family, blessing the accident that threw the lucky orphan in their way.

The servant who had not the least recollection of her person, stood up, at their entrance, with the utmost respect, and received her letter for his master with a servility in his manner that shewed his penetration ; a treaty with so beautiful a creature, bore omens of the good fortune of the negotiation which this trusty domestic knew how to make use of. As soon as he was gone from the door, every mouth was open with inquiries of the contents of the letter, and her answer, which last Mr. Dalton hinted he might have been consulted on ; she produced the letter, he read it twice over, making remarks as he went on, expatiating on the generosity, the goodness of heart, the frankness of disposition,

disposition, and above all, the humility of the writer, whose praises were echoed by his wife and daughter, "Well, my dear girl," said Mrs. Dalton, "now your answer; I long to see that; I am sure it is clever, you have such a knack at your pen;" she presented a paper with the rough copy, but it is not in the power of pen to paint the instant change of countenance, the surprize and dejection of one part, the rage and malice of the other, when Dalton read the following:

"MY LORD,

"I am equally ignorant of the sentiments of tenderness, or the regard on which they are founded, that gives your Lordship a right to wave any ceremony consistent with your dignity, or due to me. The contents of your letter, my Lord, whether serious or ironical, it is not in my power to determine; but I frankly own, nothing coming from a man who, unprovokedly, could so essentially injure an innocent orphan, can be either agreeable or eligible, in the common occurrences of life, much less when the sacred union of marriage is proposed.

"My Lord, I really have the prudence to set too great a value on my own peace and happiness, to sacrifice either to your imaginary generosity; nor will (I trust) the gratitude of my disposition be called for in the acknowledgment of any farther favour conferred by your Lordship on,

My Lord, &c. &c.

A. MANSEL.*

The paper fell from his hand as he concluded it, and his wife's face exhibited a variety of colours; spite and fury darted their rays from the eyes of Peggy; but speech was denied to them all.

Anna

Anna naturally concluded their own views might lead them to wish to see a person on whom, she confessed, they had many claims, in a situation to repay them every obligation ; but she had no suspicion they would look on her as a passive machine, to work their own advantage with ; little less could she expect the scene that followed : “ Wretch,” cried Dalton, at last, “ and have you, then, dared “ to send this scrawl to that worthy nobleman ; “ who, ungrateful fool, dost thou think is bound “ to support thy up-start pride, or how wilt thou “ pay what the law will enforce for thy maintenance and bringing up, which I now demand, “ and will instantly employ an officer to arrest thee “ for ; you shall go, madam, to jail, and see if “ there, in want of food, raiment, and every necessary of life, you will find another Dalton !” With these words he went hastily out of the room, leaving Anna a statue of surprize and terror ; it was now her turn to be dumb, tears were likewise denied her ; she already saw herself in the rude hands of bailiffs, and anticipated the terror of the prison she was threatened with. Mrs. Dalton, though she had no idea, her husband could really intend a measure her conscience told her was at once barbarous and unjust, was, in reality, so much displeased and hurt herself that she the readier adopted the conduct he had assumed, though at the same time, she was sure it was merely meant to intimidate her. Peggy, the unfeeling Peggy, forsook the cause of her youth and sex, to vent the most cruel reproaches for Anna’s ungrateful return to her father’s charity, and reviled her, in the bitterest terms, for her pride and poverty ; adding every insult envy and ill-nature could invent to her invectives. It is not probable an early period would have been put to her eloquence, had it not been interrupted by the sudden fall off the chair, where

where she sat, of the unhappy object to whom it was addressed.

Pale and motionless, when they beheld her at their feet, fright and terror took the place of anger; and dear self being still the object in view, operated now as strongly in their endeavours to recover, as it had before done in reducing her to the situation she was then in; they got her laid on a bed, unlaced, and almost washed her with hartshorn in vain. From the instant Dalton left the room, her senses forsook her, nor had she been sensible of a single reproach from either mother or daughter. To their mutual consternation and dismay, they found every effort to restore her to life ineffectual; they sent to every probable place after Dalton; he was not to be found. They then began to have the most alarming fears for her life, and at length sent for Dr. Collet; his skill and attention, in half an hour, brought her to the appearance of sense; but her perfect recovery was preceded by a violent burst of hysterics. Collet found himself exceedingly interested for his patient, so lovely a woman he had never before seen, and the situation in which he found her, left not a doubt with him, but the disorder was on her mind; and notwithstanding all he had heard concerning her, she had so much the peculiar happiness of bearing in her open countenance the traits of innocence and ingenuity, that Collet became an instant convert to her looks: he asked, with the voice of kindness, how she found herself, and whether there was any thing in his power, as doctor, or friend, that would soothe or relieve the evident distress of her mind; she thanked him fervently for the humane offer, but said, at present, she had not sufficiently the power of recollection to avail herself of his friendship, nor did she chuse wholly to

decline it: she earnestly begged, then, to be left to herself, which was complied with on the part of Mrs. Dalton with some difficulty.

C H A P. XLIX.

The Elopement.

IT was by this time three o'clock, and no Dalton returned; her dread of his re-appearance was unspeakable: at first it occurred to her she might go to Mrs. Wellers', but as that step could not fail to enrage Dalton, what could she hope from it but to be torn from her protection, or to be a tax on the generosity of people who were little more than strangers to her, to pay his demand. If the idea of Mr. Bently's particular charge presented itself, it was accompanied by the same conclusion, and her return to Mr. Mansel was, for that reason, rendered impracticable; but to continue under the roof of a man who could suffer such a thought to enter his heart against her, was to put herself entirely in his power. As to Lord Sutton, it was unfortunate for that passionate lover, that he never obtruded on the thoughts of his fair mistress, unattended by some very untoward circumstance by way of concomitant to the antipathy she felt for him.

When little more than an infant, she was discarded by Mrs. Melmoth, *he* was the person to whose baneful influence she attributed that misfortune; when she lost the favour of Lady Edwin, *he* was the suspected, though secret enemy; and now when her heart was breaking with grief and apprehension,

apprehension, her misery originated with *him* ; and could any circumstance on earth induce her to hesitate one moment, whether to reject, at all risks, or unite herself, for life, to a being she held with so much reason in abhorrence ? His she determined never to be ; and no way offering to her imagination to avoid him but flight, it no sooner struck her as her only resource, than she instantly resolved to put it into execution ; but here again a thousand difficulties occurred ; she was wholly without acquaintance, destitute of friends, and had very little money, not a creature in the created space of nature could she apply to for protection or assistance ; nevertheless, the alternative was too horrible to suffer her to deliberate, her part was to resolve.

The stage, she recollected, passed towards London at five o'clock ; could she but reach that she would have hope. Mrs. Wellers was in London, on the inquiries after her character in Grosvenor square ; to her she might easily write, and by that means put it out of the cruel Dalton's power to be troublesome to her friends ; the idea that again brought Dalton and his threats to her mind, was so terrible, all fear of danger, all dread of throwing herself among strangers vanished : of the wickedness and villainy every where to be met with in the metropolis she had heard, but it must be bad, indeed, if in any part worse men than Sutton, or more barbarous than Dalton were to be found ; the least delay might put it out of her power to escape ; he might now be coming to put his threats in execution ; that very night might be spent in a prison, from whence she could not be liberated, but at the expence of every thing dear to her ; no time was therefore left for consideration.

Her bed room luckily contained all her trunks, and what else of value she could call her own ; she
hastily

hastily packed up a couple of gowns, some linen, and a few valuables, the late property of the deceased Mrs. Mansel; that done, the doctor's friendly offer recurred to her memory; she begged the maid to call him without disturbing her mistress, who was at dinner; the girl, who very much respected her, obeyed, and Collet was introduced alone to his fair patient.

Her terror and agitation increasing as the day advanced, her natural timidity gave way to the urgency of her affairs, she therefore instantly asked him if he was in earnest in his offers to serve her? Upon his word he was.

"Well, then," Sir," said she, "it is of the last importance to me to be able to quit this place directly: I have not a moment to lose, nor a friend in the world; I am in debt to Mr. Dalton more than is in my power to pay, but I leave things of value behind me, those trunks are all full of good cloaths, given me (bursting into tears,) by a dear friend who loved me: I have no wish but to pay as far as all I have will go; will you, Sir, be so good as to put your seal on them for that purpose?" "I will do any thing you wish me," said the good-natured Collet, greatly moved.—"God reward you, Sir," answered she: "one favour more I have to ask, which is, your advice how I shall convey this bundle to the stage, unseen by the family."—"I will send my boy," returned Collet, "throw it out of the back window, he shall receive and carry it round the corner, whither you had best follow the moment you can get out."

Mrs. Dalton now coming up, the doctor took himself off, first giving a significant glance at the window. When he was gone, Mrs. Dalton began to wonder what was become of her husband, where he could be gone, and on what errand; for
whatever

whatever he might say in his passion, she was sure, except very much provoked indeed, he would never take the step he had threatened Anna with ; to be sure it was a very grievous thing to have a young person they had brought up as their own, and loved so well, turn out so obstinate, self willed, and blind to her own interest, as well as theirs ; and after always behaving so well to her, to have her refuse an offer that would be the making of them all ; but she hoped, on seriously considering the importance and advantage of Lord Sutton's love, Anna, her dear Anna, would think better of it. 'The good woman who really loved our heroine, blended her happiness so entirely with the interest of her own family, that she persuaded herself it was one and the same thing, and her intreaties were accompanied with tears. Anna had the gentlest of human hearts, every instance of maternal tenderness now returned to her memory ; she recollected, with gratitude and affection, the exposed state of her infancy, and candidly owned to herself the hopes entertained of the aggrandizement of their family through such unexpected means, were natural ; and, therefore, in consequence, the disappointment bitter : she was now, for the last time, perhaps, with a person who had been to her a careful good woman ; it was yet in her power to satisfy her own feelings, by amply rewarding the care taken of her helpless years ; or it was yet in her choice to abandon what had been to her a parental roof, and by exposing herself to a pitiless world, encounter evils of which she had but a faint idea——her coward heart shrunk from the trial. But what was the dreadful alternative ? Lord Sutton, proud, designing, and vindictive, was it probable he would forego a scheme, which, by his own note, it was proved, had cost him so dear, or would he not rather seek revenge for the indignity

indignity offered his pride? Interest she well knew to be the god of Dalton's idolatry: so rich, so powerful a man, whose very name carried a talismanic influence with narrow minds, wanted not the means, and it was idle to think he would want inclination, to prevail on him to act as he directed; the cruelty of his disposition she knew, and dreaded being its victim; but to marry him, or indeed any other man but one in the world, she would die first; and again, the terrors she before felt at the thoughts of Dalton's return, seized her, which, on her being forbid walking in the air, increased to such a degree, it was with great difficulty she was kept from fainting; she then begged to be left to rest, as she was too weak, and too much exhausted for conversation. Mrs. Dalton, with her natural good humour, desired her to think on what she had said, and put it in her power to inform Mr. Dalton, when he came home, of her resolution to apologize to Lord Sutton for the rude and improper letter she sent him. Anna's eyes filled with tears as Mrs. Dalton affectionately embraced her at parting; again her resolution wavered—when casting her eye towards the window, she saw Collet's lad; that instant, therefore was the crisis of her fate; no time must be lost in deliberation; she threw out the bundle, and recommending herself and her cause to the protection of heaven, stole down, unperceived, through a back door, into a lane, from whence a foot-path crossed a field, out of the sight of the house, and led to the high road; at the stile she found the lad waiting with her things, and in half a minute the stage, which Collet had ordered to stop there, drew up; fortunately it had no other passenger; she hastily got into it, and drawing up the shutter, which was half wood and half glass, took breath.

C H A P. L.

The Storm.

I N the first hurry of Anna's spirits, she knew not whether to lament or rejoice at the success of her scheme ; her unfriended situation, and total ignorance of any part of London, but that least eligible for her to be seen in, or any one person to whom, in her present situation, she could properly apply, so shocked her imagination, that the coach no sooner moved off than her courage failed ; fear and apprehension tempted her to return ; suppose she went to Mrs. Wellers only to try whether a man, who had brought her up with his own children, could really be so cruel, so inhuman ; or whether his threats were not, as Mrs. Dalton said, the effects of passion, which would be forgot when that was over ; at worst, she could but leave the Hill privately, if he persisted in his demands.

This new plan, aided by the recoiling of her imagination at the dreary prospect before her, had well nigh been adopted, when over the top of the shutter, as she was going to cast a wishful look on the place she had left, a hackney coach passed, in which she plainly saw the hated visage of Lord Sutton in earnest conference with Dalton—a sight so confirming to her worst fears, turned the scale : she threw herself on her knees, to thank Heaven for having inspired her with resolution to fly from the snare laid for her, and again endeavoured to think of some place, where she might be for the present, secure from the evil she had escaped, as
well

well as those to which she might be still liable : after turning in her mind every possible means of procuring a safe and creditable lodging, she was obliged to leave that essential point to chance.

It was about half past six when the stage got to Whitechapel ; the first stand they came to, she desired the driver to call her a hackney coach, and changed her vehicle without having yet determined where to go ; after being repeatedly asked by the coachman where he was to drive, not being able to recollect any other place, she answered Westminster—" Westminster !" repeated the man, " is " a large place—you may as well order me to drive " to London—What part must I go to ?" This question, simple as it was, confused and disturbed her ; after some hesitation, she answered " The " Abbey."—The man mounted his box and drove off. Every step they went filled her with unspeakable apprehensions they should soon reach their journey's end : where upon earth could she go then, whose existence seemed of consequence to no creature living : even the shelter of an hackney coach had a degree of comfort attending it ; yet of that she should soon be deprived. Every busy face she passed, however mean their appearance, were objects whose situations were in comparison of hers, enviable—They had a home ; they had connections ; they were not destitute of the endearing ties of blood : even the wretched wanderer, who knows not where to lay his head, could share his miseries with parents, children, or some kind relatives, who would feel for, if they could not relieve his distress. In the midst of those unsupportable reflections, it began to thunder and lighten, the rain poured in torrents from the heavens, and the coachman, impatient himself to obtain shelter from the weather, drove on at a furious rate—Anna was naturally terrified at thunder ; it was a weakness

weakness she was particularly subject to ; but at this period, the terror of the storm, lost in the more shocking situation of her mind, was not attended to, till turning the corner of a narrow street, which the coachman had chosen to cut the way as short as possible, one of the hind wheels flew off and the coach instantly overturned : providentially she received no hurt, but what was the effect of the fright, and that was much less, than it would have been, had such an accident happened to her in less distressed circumstances.—People flocked to their doors, although the storm continued still too violent to suffer many to gratify their curiosity by crowding round the broken vehicle : however, a decent, elderly woman, at whose little shop window hung a few pair of gloves and stockings, together with some children's shoes and caps, opened her glass door and invited our heroine in : she thankfully accepted her civility, and was conducted through a small shop into a smaller parlour, where sat a young woman in mourning, who very good-naturedly offered her chair, and assisted the woman of the shop in her civilities : the tears of Anna, whose inward agitation was far greater than her apparent cause, were no longer to be restrained ; she wept violently ; and having given that seasonable vent to her emotions grew more composed. The first thing that then struck her, was the bundle, which in her confusion she had forgot to take out of the coach, but entirely ignorant of the villany practised constantly in the metropolis, without feeling the least alarmed, she now directed her attention to the carriage.

A mob had by this time surrounded it, the coachman had taken off the horses, and was going, as he said, to ask his master's directions about the coach, when he was stopped to give an account of
the

the lady's bundle: the man either had not seen it, or counterfeited it very well, for he directly returned and searched every part in and about the coach, without success; it was not to be found.

When this unfortunate circumstance was told Anna, she actually gasped for breath, and for some moments her countenance, ever expressive of the feelings of her heart, looked the most poignant despair. A watch, two guineas, and a mourning ring, was her whole possession—Without a single change of any sort, a friend to speak to, or home to receive her, she found herself very much indisposed; had uncommon pains in her head and limbs, and the accumulating misfortunes that followed her, so affected her, she thought her woes were drawing to a period—Not able to stand, she sunk to the ground, exclaiming, God be merciful to me! What is to come next! The women in vain attempted to sooth and pacify her; the agitation of her mind, the adventures of the day, and the uncertainty of what might yet happen before the close of it, added to an uncommon heat and drought, which increased every moment, induced her willingly to accept of the humane offer made her by Mrs. Hughes and the young woman I mentioned, to lie down on the bed, where she presently fell into so sound a sleep it was not easy to awake her.

The hospitable women gave themselves no other concern, as the night came on, about their guest, than what the idea of the sufferings of the friends of so amiable a creature on her staying out, suggested. I have said, Anna's countenance always made her friends; they were charmed with her looks and manner, nor could they refrain as she lay asleep, admiring the beauty of her person—Above the middling class they were sure she was; her dress was perfectly genteel and good, though plain,

plain, it was indeed the very Circassian described by Miss Bibins——A large black bonnet and cloak, a morning cap, and hair quite undressed, half hid the elegance of her figure, when she entered the house; but when these were removed, she appeared, as she really was, a most perfect creature.

At midnight she awoke; but what was the consternation of the women to find her totally insensible to every thing around her, and burning hot; they immediately sent for a neighbouring apothecary, who pronounced her in a fever of the irruptive kind.

The distress of the women may be conceived, when in addition to the small hopes he gave of her recovery to sense, before the turn of her disorder, their search, which was made in his presence into her pockets, left them in entire ignorance of her family, friends, and connections—In this dreadful state, Providence threw our heroine on the benevolence of people, whose goodness of heart and humane disposition were such, that power only was wanting to render them of the greatest benefit to society.

Mrs. Hughes was a young widow, whose concerns had brought her to London for a few weeks, and had accidentally taken that lodging; she declared, she would not only give up her bed to the poor stranger, but would defray the expence of her illness: the woman of the house and her daughter agreed alternately to nurse her, and the apothecary engaged his constant attendance. In this state of insensibility, happy to her, we must now leave our heroine, and return to our friends at Layton.

C H A P. LI.

A noble Mind in Distress.

WHEN Dalton went out in the morning, his first aim was to overtake the servant who carried Anna's answer to her noble lover; rage gave him strength, and between walking and running, he reached the mansion of Lord Sutton within one minute after the man got admittance—The next thing was to endeavour to soften the harsh ungrateful letter his Lordship had just received. He was shewn into the library, where he found that flower of nobility, trying to hide his mortified vanity and anger, under the appearance of contempt. "Very well, Mr. Parson," said he, with the open letter in his hand, "upon my honour this same ward of yours does you infinite credit." "My Lord, I beg, I entreat your Lordship," bowing to the very ground—"Oh, pray say no more; the thing is at an end; I shall certainly not trouble Miss any more: yet,"—swearing pretty roundly, "a man of my rank, my connections, my fortune and figure in the world, to be refused by a wench with not a sixpence—but it is now plain she was undone; that Welch fellow had certainly got her; it was impossible she could else have been so blind to the honour he had done her; but she would dearly repent it"—"That she shall, indeed my good Lord," answered Dalton; "if your Lordship gives her up, she shall rot in a jail." At this threat, the noble munificent countenance of the peer brightened up: he agreed,

agreed, she deserved no favour either from his good friend or himself, nor should she find any; but when he was acquainted with what had passed in the morning, he blamed Dalton for his well-meant zeal; wisely concluding, if there really was a connection between her and Edwin, it was likely he would be applied to by her, on such an exigence: however, after many arguments pro and con, it was determined Dalton should sue out a writ against Anna for one hundred and fifty pounds; and take down an officer, in order, if circumstances should render it necessary, to oblige her to return with him to town, and his Lordship condescended to be of the party. But the Power who counteracts the deepest-laid schemes, rendered this step the means of disconcerting the whole matter; for had they not been met, as I have related, by our heroine, her terror at the step she had taken, would have certainly carried her back, where in all human probability, she must at last have become the property of the man she most hated on earth.

She was not missed when they arrived at the village—In order to avoid any alarm, Dalton and his noble companion alighted before they got to the house, and the officer was directed to put up the coach and wait at the King's Head.

Mrs. Dalton and Peggy were at tea, when this unexpected honour dropped in on them; grievous was the tale they had to relate—The shock poor Anna had received dwelt too strongly on Mrs. Dalton's mind, not to be repeated with sincere distress; and Lord Sutton was warned by a look from the husband, not to trust her with any more of their intentions than could be avoided.

Mortified and enraged, as was that nobleman, he could not help betraying different emotions, during her account of the pitiable situation of his
lovely

lovely conquerers, to find himself, and what was more, his fortune, held in contempt, at the same moment that he yet adored the implacable object, who thus dared to reject his love and scorn his power; to know when they were of the most consequence to his peace, all his arts, all his plausible, his studied manœuvres, failed in their expected effect, inflicted on him a sensible grief; and the idea that she who occasioned it was likewise miserable, gave him a malignant pleasure; but again, when fancy brought to his mental view, the lovely, the enchanting maid, her in whom all his wishes centered, torn with anguish, sinking with distress and fear; feelings of tenderness, utter strangers before to his callous heart, softened and unmanned him; equally unable to bear sensations so new, or to exist under the torture of suspense, he desired to see her, and begged Mrs. Dalton to assure her it should be, if she wished it, the last time he would trouble her.

She went up stairs, but returned in a second with a look of consternation, and told them Anna was not there.

What, was she so soon recovered, was she out? Oh, said Dalton, I'll rouse her I'll warrant you; and going up called loudly on her name at every step; in short the apartments, the garden, and environs were all searched; no Anna was to be found. "Well, it was very sly, Peggy said, but "she was undoubtedly gone to Mrs. Wellers." She was dispatched to inquire—she had not been there—that lady went early to town and was not returned.

A general council was now called, and inquiries made in the neighbourhood. Mr. Bently's parting words were overheard by Peggy—she would lay her life Anna was gone to the Abbey. Another messenger was sent there, and returned unsuccessful.

cessful. Lord Sutton could not think of going home on that uncertainty, though his heart sunk within him, and jealousy was among the new and comfortable inmates of his bosom.

Late in the evening, a message was brought from Mrs. Wellers desiring to see Miss Mansel in the morning; they avoided giving the servant a hint of her absence, at the request of Lord Sutton, whose pride was gratified in the superior notice taken of her he so ardently wished to call his own. He staid there that night, but without even laying down, and respect obliged the family to accompany him.

The morning brought him no satisfaction; and the anxiety of his soul so affected his health, and lowered his spirits, as rendered him an object truly deplorable; he desired some tea, and ordered the coach to convey him home.

C H A P. LII.

Candid Conclusions.

WHILE the tea was getting ready, Mrs. Wellers, having heard some rumour of the elopement, which was confirmed by Anna's not coming to her appointment, walked down to Dalton's: as she had no knowledge of Lord Sutton's person, and either that was not an emblem of his rank and dignity, or she was so stupid as not to observe it: her eyes brushed slightly over him to Mrs. Dalton, whose looks plainly spoke her want of rest, and disturbed mind, she asked after Miss Mansel.

Mrs. Dalton

Mrs. Dalton burst into tears; her apprehensions were secret but dismal, and she dreaded every rap at the door would fatally confirm the sad presage her mind had formed; her husband, who now saw the matter would become the talk of the place, thought to make the best of it, by saying they had a few words, and Miss Mansel had left them in a huff. Mrs. Wellers sighed, but made no comments on either side; after a little insignificant chat, she took her leave; it was, so much had she been influenced in favour of Anna; painful to her to encounter the surmises and hints, she knew would employ the whole village; she could say nothing in vindication of her favourite, and it was irksome to her, to hear condemned a young creature who had made so great an interest in her esteem in so short a time; she, therefore, took the field way home; where, when she arrived Mr. Bently was waiting for her. “Why, Madam “Wellers,” said he eagerly, “your little friend “is naught at last; she is gone off, it seems. “Well, well, I have been deceived by man and “betrayed by woman; and since this girl, whose “looks carried the innocence of infancy into the “maturity of beauty, has likewise imposed on my “hopes, by a false appearance, I will no more be “a dupe to my own wishes, but, Madam, can you “say nothing for her; will your candour give her “up? Do say something—for the credit of human nature, do—say this is a cursed scandalous “place—that the girl is ill used, and that she “is under your protection;—for the love of “God, do.”

“I wish, Mr. Bently,” answered the good woman, “I could with truth, say all you wish in her “favour.”

“What, you can’t then? and she is not gone “to your son’s? Cursed be the arts that seduced “the

“ the fairest work of heaven; but it is quite over,
 “ can nothing be done to save or to reclaim her?
 “ Half my fortune would I this moment give to
 “ have her now sitting at your right hand in innocence and honour.”

Mrs. Wellers, whose soul fraught with every virtue of humanity, and all her sex's softness about it, and whose attachment to Anna had been as pleasing as strong, was affected beyond expression at the earnestness of the generous Bently; she dropped a tear which infected her companion.

At this moment a Mrs. Wilson was announced; this person was formerly a servant in the family, married the coachman, and was at this period mistress of the inn heretofore described; she was an old maid when she entered the holy pale, was then, and still continued, a woman of that volubility, and thirst of knowledge, few things passed in the village she was not acquainted with, either in the public or private transactions of its inhabitants; and fewer still she did not repeat with her own comments and additions. She knew Madam Wellers was very fond of the girl at the Methodist Parson's, though she had not taken half the notice of a niece of her's she had recommended to succeed in her place; her natural love of gossip was therefore increased by two motives, one was, a desire of shewing Mrs. Wellers how ill-judged her partiality was; the other, a bit of revenge, for her presuming to take a young person into greater favour than her aforesaid niece; she still continued to wash her mistress's laces; the excuse for this morning's call, was to know if she wanted any thing done; and before an answer could be given, asked if she had heard the news?

Mrs. Wellers guessed it respected Anna, and not being under any restraint with this woman, answered

swered in the negative, and bid her repeat what she had heard :

“ Why, dear me, ma’am, that young body at
 “ parson Dalton’s has shewn her cloven foot at
 “ last ; in good earnest she is gone off with the
 “ gentleman, he who used you so ill, Sir,” curt-
 “ fying to Bently : “ what a pity it was you was so
 “ deceived in her—every body wondered how it
 “ could be.”

“ That she is gone,” said Mrs. Wellers, “ I
 “ believe, but not with any gentleman.” “ Ah
 “ law, ma’am, well, to be sure, it’s vastly good
 “ in you ; but indeed ’tis a great pity. Dr. Parker’s
 “ old groom lives with him, and he told my hus-
 “ band and I no longer than yesterday, what a
 “ fine beautiful lady his wife is, and a power of
 “ money she brought him ; for my part, I think
 “ it a shame such sluts are suffered to live, I would
 “ have them burnt alive. There was he in a
 “ horseman’s great coat, and Tom out of his li-
 “ very ; I hardly knew him, I am sure, waiting
 “ and peeping about at our house, till he got her
 “ off ; but it will come home to the huffy, that’s a
 “ sure thing.”

Mrs. Wellers was astonished—Mr. Bently questioned her over and over ; she varied not ; indeed there was little room for variation, as it was literally true. Mr. Edwin having sent his valet to reconnoitre, and hearing by him that Anna walked alone to the hill, watched for that opportunity of following and speaking to her ; her sudden illness reached Mrs. Wilton, and she, according to custom, set it going ; Edwin was soon informed of an accident that rendered his journey a fruitless one, nevertheless he waited, till by the same channel of intelligence he heard of her recovery, and then returned to London. Mr. Bently groaned, and beat a ta-too with his oaken towel ; Mrs. Wellers was

was lost in thought, when Dr. Collet made his appearance; and Wilton was ordered to wait in the kitchen.

In the assistance given our heroine, Dr. Collet had been wholly actuated by the divine impulse of humanity and compassion; he had not at the time suffered a thought of the propriety, or even the legality of the act to intervene between his philanthropy and his prudence; he had solemnly engaged to put his seal on her effects; but it had not occurred to him it was proper he should know her motives for the desperate step she was taking; he had promised young Herbert to watch all her actions, and yet had assisted her to move out of his knowledge; those things considered, he was out of humour with his own conduct; and having mused on the part it now became him to act, till bewildered in his ideas, he walked to the hill to communicate the whole transaction, and to take Mrs. Wellers' advice and opinion on it. Mr. Bently and the lady were at first barely attentive, but the story soon made interested auditors, when it was concluded: "then," cried Mr. Bently with transport, "she is not at last gone with that puppy, and she was willing to give up her finery to pay her debts? Poor girl, though given by a friend who loved her too! Ah, lovely girl, thou wilt find many I fear, who will supply that loss, love! Yes, the lion loves the lamb to destroy it; but it shall be thine own fault, if, whether now innocent or guilty, thy future steps lead not to honour and peace." Mrs. Wellers' first impressions at hearing Collet's relation, were those of joy; but when she laid every circumstance together, there appeared nothing in her application to the doctor, for his assistance, to clear her from the suspicion of going with Edwin; that, and the manner of her departure, at the instant she knew

C 2

inquiries

inquiries were making into her character, was rather a confirmation of the worst, and, indeed, was one strong reason why he was dissatisfied at his own conduct, which appeared, on reflection, rather an act of weakness than humanity. Not so, Mr. Bently, he was obstinately bent on retaining every favourable impression of her, and so peevish at the least hint that tended to set any part of her conduct in a blameable light, that Mrs. Weller suffered him to depart without acquainting him, as she did the doctor, with all her reasons for fearing the worst.

C H A P. LIII.

French Policy.

WHEN we left the Edwin family, it was not with the most favourable ideas of the stability of their friendships, or the consistency of their conduct.

Frajan had strong reasons to fear, as well as to hate Anna. No sooner had she shut each avenue of kindness to her at Melmoth Lodge, than, insatiate in avarice as revenge, she began to consider how, in every point of view, the innocent girl's ruin could be turned most to her interest; half the money Mrs. Melmoth, by desire of the Colonel, had ordered, she put into her own purse; void of principle, modesty or common honesty, it was not to be expected the amiable governante would lose any opportunity of blackening the character of a young creature she had so deeply injured, and whose return to favour would

would discover her fraud and iniquity : one enormous act of wickedness too often is succeeded by another ; encouraged by the success, or necessitated to conceal the past, the progression of vice, after the first plunges, becomes not only easy, but convenient : Madame Frajan wanted not these inducements ; the money was already her own, some point lace of Mrs. Melmoth's became next a temptation, too invitingly in her way to be resisted ; Anna was employed in looking it over the morning of her dismissal from the Lodge. It was very elegant and valuable, but had it been ten times more so, Mrs. Melmoth would not have thought of demanding it of our heroine before her departure. In a few days, however, the lace was inquired after ; the house was searched from top to bottom ; it was nowhere to be found,—it was certainly stole : Frajan insisted on having her trunks and drawers examined, although, *Dieu merci*, she had heretofore been trusted with jewels to the value of thousands, and could have her character attested by some of the first English ladies ; but as it had been her misfortune to be companioned in the manner she had since her residence at the Lodge, not only her trunks but her person must be searched : in this reasonable request Mrs. Melmoth begged she might by all means be indulged. No lace could be found ; and the child, on whom the wind, a few months before, was not suffered to blow too roughly ; in whose bosom vice of any kind had not found a place, was branded as a thief. Mr. Melmoth's affairs were in too much confusion to suffer him to attend to the chit-chat of his house ; and his wife's credulity laid her too open to the artifices of Frajan : she was the easier duped by her, as the story got abroad, and was implicitly believed at Ashby Grove. Colonel Gorget protested it was what he expected : that gallant veteran, though he
had

had not a doubt about who had really got the lace, was pleased to encourage any report that would add to the disgrace of the poor orphan, and for ever bar each passage, humanity and regret might else have opened, for her re-entrance to favour at Melmoth Lodge.

Thus, first among the servants, then in the village, from thence into every gentleman's in the vicinity, from them to the next market town, and so over the county by degrees, a lamentable story of Mrs. Melmoth's robbery, and by whom, was circulated, and universally believed; with this simple addition, the one suit of point was magnified into three, to which were added some jewels of great value.

This tale at last coming to Mr. Melmoth's ears, greatly accelerated the discharge of Frajan; he turned her out of the house the instant he heard it, declaring he should as soon suspect his own child of being dishonest as Anna.

On Frajan's return to London, she found her friend the Colonel in despair of recovering the fugitive Anna, but very civil to her, though unable to procure her admission into any other genteel family; and Lady Waldron, being at that time past fear of any discovery in the power of her *fille de chambre* to make, having been unfortunately interrupted, in a very interesting *tête à tête* with her own footman, by the person most concerned in the discovery, namely, her lord, necessity obliged the accomplished French woman to lower her views; and she afterwards filled the several stations of

Figure-dancer at the play house,

Bar-maid at an inn,

Sultana to the master of a strolling puppet-show,

Teacher at a boarding-school, and

Housekeeper

Houfekeeper to a fingle gentleman frifeur, from whom ſhe had received notice to provide herſelf, at the time her ennobled patron formed the deſign of giving the *Coup de Grace* to his fortune, carrying off, in his fifty-fixth year, an heiress under twenty-one.

Lord Sutton was introduced to Lady Edwin and her daughter, at a fashionable aſſembly, where he was an invited gueſt. The riches of the Edwins were exaggerated by the world: the œconomy of their well-regulated expences enabled them to do ſo many benevolent, and even magnificent things, and their payments of all kinds were ſo punctual, that, ample as was their fortune, fame doubled it: the antient and honourable houſe of Trevanion was likewiſe univerſally known and acknowledged; they were the firſt women at the aſſembly, and his pride attached him to their party during the evening. The weak ſide of Lady Edwin was family pride; of her daughter, perſonal vanity: Lord Sutton's ſtudy was woman's weakneſs, and his triumph their folly: he made ſo good a uſe of his penetration, that he received from Lady Edwin a general invitation to Groſvenor-square.

There, in his frequent viſits, he ſaw his way to Cecilia; he artfully exhibited his own riches as a temptation, whereby he might poſſeſs himſelf of hers; he ſoon became enamoured, he adored, he died for her; and ſo far ſucceeded, as to obtain her permiſſion, to apply to her parents for their conſent to his felicity: but Welch obſtinacy was not to be ſubdued by Iriſh fraud; for though he had made himſelf maſter of every memorable event in Lady Edwin's family, though he knew the particulars of all the battels in which her anceſtors had diſtinguiſhed themſelves; and he had the princely Llewellins, the heroic Tudors, and the valiant Hughs, of her race, at his finger's end, it
would

would not clear, from his own genealogy, the blot of Gorget.

The son of an Irish adventurer marry into the family of Trevanion! the offer was not simply rejected, it was an insult; Lady Edwin would not hear it mentioned; she should blush to look on the busts of her progenitors after so ignominious an act: all she could be prevailed on, and that with great difficulty, was to conceal her indignation, and put a negative on Lord Sutton's proposal, without assigning any particular reason.

Mortifying as this rejection was, he concealed the rancour it occasioned: the pride of Lady Edwin stimulated his own; hers could not be greater than his; the difference was, hers was founded on a real grandeur of soul, that valued the virtues as much as the honour of her ancestors, and piqued herself in equally supporting both; his was the poor boast of riches accumulated with disgrace, and wickedness crowned with success. Not despairing of bringing the daughter to avenge his cause on the mother, he affected to submit with respect and patience to a sentence which robbed him, he swore to Miss Edwin, of more than life. Like a philosopher, while he laid a plan to undermine parental authority; like himself, with a guarded caution, he continued his footing in the family, paying his devoirs at the shrine of vanity and folly, assiduously improving every opportunity of ingratiating himself into the young lady's favour.

Miss Edwin began to grow extremely tired of restraint, though she had as little as most ladies of the age, in her purse, her dress, and her visitors; but the dignity of virtue, and the regular, honourable system of conduct adopted by her parents, forbade the dear flirtation, the polite freedom of some part of the beau monde; a
married

married lover, for instance, Lady Edwin would have shuddered to have seen her daughter smile upon; a known libertine she admitted not within her doors; and all coquetry she utterly despised.

How much more delightful, then, to figure away as Lady Sutton, accountable to none for her actions: as to the old lord, it would be enough for him to have the honour of so fine a creature to bear his name, spend his fortune, and at times, when no more agreeable engagements offered, to preside at his table, without his presuming to interfere in her conduct.

She had nearly brought herself to listen to his proposals of elopement, when her journey to Bedfordshire suspended his operations; but, like a wise general, Lord Sutton took care to have a friend in the garrison, in the person of Madame Frajan, whom he procured to wait on the young lady; and at the time they returned to town all was ready for the last step; he was to sigh, swear, and vow; Frajan to plead the cause of liberty and pleasure; when vengeance, in the form of an angel, stopped his career.

Concluding, as I said before, that Anna was really the daughter of Mrs. Melmoth, and quite out of his reach, the despair of again meeting her had conquered the violence of his appetite, without effacing from his heart the impression of her beauty; Anna Dalton was often present to his imagination; her opening charms recurred to his memory, and excited desire, when nothing else could.

When, therefore, this trusty confidant brought him the news of her re-appearance, and that, in a situation to warrant a renewal of his former hopes; the journey to Scotland, the riches, nor the family of Miss Edwin, had any longer attractions: he liberally rewarded his intelligence, and

sent her home with full instructions for her conduct, and a promise of reward for her future services.

After reckoning the moments till ten o'clock, he repaired to Lady Edwin's assembly; where the first sight of Anna, drove every other thought of woman out of his head; his heart became a willing victim to the mature loveliness of the child he had followed with his unhallowed wishes; every glance of her eye, every turn of her countenance, and every gesture, gave him emotions, both of love and fear; he sat, indeed, by Miss Edwin; he attempted at compliment to her, but his looks, his admiration, and his passion, were all directed to Anna; and his hopes now rested, with anxious eagerness on the assistance of Frajan, whom he sent a billet to before he left the house.

The envy and jealousy, which had banished from Miss Edwin's mind, every kind thought of the young person she had once honoured with her friendship and correspondence, was increased by her observation of the looks directed from her noble lover to Anna; pride, in this case, was as strong an excitement to hatred and dislike, as inclination in that of Herbert; yet the rancour of her disposition must have recoiled on herself, had not her good fortune furnished her with so respectable an assistant as Madame Frajan. After our heroine retired from the drawing-room, and the assembly broke up, Cecilia begged an audience of Sir William and Lady Edwin.

She began with great affected humility, to ask their forgiveness, for what had passed in the morning, alledging her natural warmth of temper, and her vexation at seeing so very unworthy a person held in such esteem in their family. Lady Edwin coloured, and rising hastily was going out of the room,

room, when Cecilia threw herself at her feet, and asked only to be heard.

Sir William doated on his children, and this softness and humility in his daughter, so unusual, and so unexpected, might have got from him half his estate, had that been the object in pursuit: he intreated his lady to hear his dear girl, and raising her in his arms, bid her speak, assuring her of all a parent's fondest love could do to make her happy. A well-timed flood of tears completed the triumph of the artful daughter over her guileless parents. Lady Edwin was re-seated, and Cecilia, after a decent time taken to re-compose her features, desired her woman might be admitted, who could acquaint them of something in Anna Mansel's character, which would convince them of the little pretensions she could have to the rank she held in their family.

Sir William wished to do without a French evidence; but his daughter persisted, and Frajan was ordered in.

The account given by her of Anna, was, that when she resided in Mr. Melmoth's house, in quality of governess to her children, the person who now had the honour of being companion to Lady Edwin, lived there, having been taken off the parish by Mrs. Melmoth; that she had ungratefully returned their charity, by every species of ill behaviour, and had at last robbed her benefactress; that she was then sent away to her parochial settlement, since which she had not heard of or even seen her from that time (three or four years ago) till this morning, when she was no less surprised to meet her in her present situation, than to hear her addressed by the name of Mansel, her real one being Dalton.

This stroke, pre-concerted between her and Cecilia, had its effect; shame and surprize were blended

blended in Lady Edwin's countenance; she professed she wanted faith; her sister, Mrs. Herbert, had recommended her to them—Was she certain as to her person as well as facts?

“ Lord Sutton, Madam, is Mrs. Melmoth's near relation; he was at the Lodge when the affair happened, and will, I dare say, confirm my account.” “ So you see, Madam,” said Miss Edwin, “ you have not only taken a beggar, a thief, and impostor, into your favour and confidence, but you have actually introduced her to your circle, and made her the companion of your children.”

The sorrow and mortification this account of Anna gave Lady Edwin, was at those reproofs, changed to anger and resentment; she sent a card to Lord Sutton, to ask, if he had known Anna Dalton at Melmoth Lodge? If she was discharged from thence on ill behaviour? If her honesty was doubted? And finally, if the young person who presided at her assembly under the name of Mansel, was the same.

THE ANSWER.

“ Lord Sutton's best compliments to Lady Edwin; assures her, it is with infinite reluctance he answers the queries contained in her card, but hopes, as the girl was very young when Lord S. knew her, time, and such great favour shewn her by a person of Lady Edwin's rank, may have worked a change in her disposition.

“ Lord Sutton did know Anna Dalton at Melmoth Lodge—she certainly was not discharged for her goodness—her honesty was indeed much suspected—she is the same person that lives with Lady Edwin as companion.”

The

The moment this card was delivered to Lady Edwin, she wrote to Mrs. Herbert, the letter which Anna was, as I have said before, ordered to deliver, severely reproaching her, for introducing into so antient and honourable a family, a person, whose origin and actions were a disgrace to any place: she then recounted her crimes, as they had been represented to her; and bitterly added her change of name as a confirmation of the whole.

C H A P. LIV.

Polite Wedding.

MRS. Herbert sinking under domestic distress, which the dissipated and unfeeling conduct of her husband continually increased, was, though exceedingly shocked, less solicitous about the fate of Anna than in easier circumstances she would have been; she examined her only on the last part of the charge, and finding that well founded, gave herself no farther trouble, but obeyed the mandates of her enraged sister immediately, by discharging the fallen favourite, and endeavoured to make her peace with the family, by recounting all she had from the deceased Mrs. Mansel known of her, which indeed amounted, as Miss Edwin said, to nothing, as she had been introduced at Llandore, as the near relation of the parson's wife. This disgraceful history of the early part of her life, gave that young lady an opportunity of entirely rooting out of her family, an object that mortified

mortified her vanity, and obstructed her views of conquest.

Mrs. Herbert and Patty were enjoined to hold no correspondence, or give any countenance to so worthless a body; Mrs. Herbert engaged for them both that they would not; and as for her daughter, overawed by her cousin, who, from her bosom friend, affected to treat the most amiable, and gentle creature in the world, with a haughty distance, the reverse of what she had been used to, she wanted courage to put in a word for her absent friend; though she well knew, from the tenor of her conduct, as well as the principles she had always adopted, and her practice of every female virtue, it was impossible she could be guilty of the mean vices laid to her charge. Though unable to speak in Grosvenor Square, when they returned to their lodgings, she was very eloquent to her mamma, reminding her of a thousand instances of goodness and even greatness of soul, they had been witnesses to in Anna.

Mrs. Herbert, more than half convinced by the generous pleadings of her daughter, would have been happy to indulge her, by again serving Anna, but she was not at liberty to act as she thought proper; Mr. Herbert's connections on one hand, and his neglect of his affairs on the other, had so involved his circumstances, that the large mortgage on their estate had been twice on the point of being foreclosed, when Lady Edwin's generosity and affection saved it.

It was now again in the same predicament, without the same resource.

Mr. Herbert was so far from wishing to conceal the causes of his ill management, that even in this excursion, he brought publicly his woman and her family with him, and the same attendants as if she had been his wife.

Sir

Sir William, enraged at the perpetual insults offered his sister, refused any more to assist her undeserving husband; this refusal was avenged on the suffering wife, by the most injurious usage.

Dead to the calls of nature, and callous to the pleadings of humanity, it was of no import to him, that his amiable and promising son was obliged to his uncle for his present support at the University, and his hopes of an establishment in life: that his lovely daughter's charms were totally overlooked, for want of the golden bait, which drew half the town after her less charming cousin; or that his deserving wife owed to the fraternal love of her brother, even the contracted appearance she now made; while her fortune, her rank, and accomplishments entitled her to figure in the first circles. Since his mistress, and her children, could no longer be supported, it was not necessary for him to be farther on any terms with a wife, who could not supply his profligate necessities.

Cecilia's dislike of Anna was very visible, and her interest over her father well known; insulted at home, dependent abroad, it was not for them, Mrs. Herbert said, to set out champions for the distressed; it might be their ruin; she therefore begged her daughter to let the matter rest, at least for the present.

Young Edwin heard this new character of Anna with more pleasure than he chose to shew; if she had lost her reputation, whether justly or not, she would be comeatable, her pride would be less, and his conquest easier; his valet well knowing his attachment to Miss Mansel, when he heard her clothes were sending off, (a secret of that kind cannot remain long so in a gentleman's family) watched with so good success, that he was able to inform his master where she was gone to,
when

when he dressed him, a piece of service which was handsomely acknowledged by Mr. Edwin.

A rich wife now becoming necessary to prevail on Sir William, to give him an independent establishment in life, when he might take to his arms the charmer for whom he sighed, when uncontrolled by the advice of his parents, and indifferent to the opinion of the world, he might keep, in the first stile, the girl he loved; the charms of Miss Turbville became every day more attracting, and the passion of her lover more violent, her consent was obtained, and at the importunate solicitations of Mr. Edwin, the marriage celebrated at the seat of the lady's guardian, in Bedfordshire almost instantaneously.

Money does every thing in London; and Seddon, with that glittering goad, contrived, in a month, to furnish their house with the most luxurious elegance, before they went out of town. Mr. Edwin taking Miss Herbert aside, asked her if she did not long to hear from her friend? "Yes," "indeed, my dear cousin, I do," answered she eagerly. "Why then," said he, "write a note and leave it in my library, and," smiling, "I think I can promise you an answer."

She did, directly, as she was instructed, but an accident happened to the answer, which drew on her the displeasure of all her family, and more particularly that of Mr. Edwin.

An heiress, a toast, a coquette, was Miss Turbville, with just as much understanding as was necessary to form such a character; she married Mr. Edwin with a disposition which, had it been improved by attention and affection on his side, might have changed the unamiable part of her character, and rendered her a valuable member of society; his person uncommonly handsome, his talents unquestionably good, and those adorned with

with every advantage that education could bestow ; his manners insinuating ; his address pleasing and perfectly polite ; it was hardly possible for Miss Turbville to avoid being satisfied and happy in the choice her deceased parents had made for her.

Mr. Edwin's person and manners, if not enforced by a great estate, would have made an impression on her heart, though, perhaps, not of that serious nature as to induce her to forego that advantage ; she, therefore, notwithstanding her passion for admiration, thought, when she married, but of loving, and being beloved by her husband.

But a very few days, nay hours, had past, after the wedding, before she found too strong reasons to suspect the match, on his side, had been perfectly one of convenience.

The large fortune she was heiress to, with an agreeable person, great taste in dress, and infinite spirit and vivacity, had made her a divinity with half the fops of the age ; flattered, followed, and caressed, in every circle in which she appeared, she had not suspected any man could be possessed of such charms and attractions so universally acknowledged, without being transported with love and gratitude ; but the cold, inanimate setting out of Edwin's career in his married state, his increasing neglect both of his wife and home, told a different tale.

She was jealous of his want of affection, without any particular reason for suspicion. Cecilia Edwin, with equal pride, vanity, and taste for pleasure, had more art, more cunning, and less beauty, than her sister-in-law, whose confidant she was ; her observations of her brother had made a discovery which she was anxious to improve, and was, in consequence, under pretence of idleness, often

often loitering in his library and apartments ; her keys, of which she had a great number, were tried to his writing table in vain ; the lock was a very good one, and curiosity was in despair, when one morning, Mr. Edwin, whose visits at Brookes's were become long and frequent, had returned home fatigued, and half asleep, at seven in the morning, and his valet being likewise tired, they had both quitted the dressing room without perceiving his keys, which were left on the table, and were seen by Miss Edwin in her usual perambulations over his apartments.

With trembling eagerness she flew to the repository of her brother's secrets, and instantly found Anna's note to Miss Herbert, which Mr. Edwin had not thought proper to deliver. " Now," said she, agitated beyond expression, " shall I find out the cunning of that creature ; and now will I expose to my sister the villany of her husband.

She was mistaken, no villany appeared ; the note was to her cousin. " Fool," said she, " he is actually carrying on a correspondence between his mistress and her lover, this letter to Miss Herbert is meant at Charles ; however, with or without your leave, my wife brother, I shall take the liberty of opening this correspondence to your wife ;" but after perusing it over and over again, she found nothing appear that, instead of criminating Anna, did not speak highly to her praise.

So direct a contradiction to her suspicions striking her very forcibly, a transient regret arose in her mind for depriving Anna of her mother's favour ; but it was only transient ; for Frajan urging the injury offered to Mrs. Edwin, in a correspondence with Mr. Edwin, for which he could have but one motive, and that a shameful one, and reminding her,

her, if she had any designs upon Charles Herbert, how necessary it was to persuade his sister of her dislike to Edwin, the spirit both of rage and jealousy continued to influence her against the unoffending Anna.

The moment she met Mrs. Edwin, the fullen, dissatisfied look of that young bride kindled into resentment, by the sight of the inclosure to her husband; she now found a reason for his deserting her bed, for his cutting indifference, and cold neglect.—She wept and tore her hair. Hysterics and bitter reproaches accompanied this discovery, as she called it, of her husband's infidelity.

The carriage was immediately ordered, and Lady Cecilia was surprised to see at her toilette both her daughters, her attendants being at their request dismissed: the letter was produced.

Lady Edwin was not more haughty in her disposition, than humane in her sentiments; the pride of high blood, was accompanied with a generosity of soul, and elevation of ideas, that she deemed hereditary virtues, and which, next to hereditary honours, was most valuable in her estimation. That a girl she had turned from her house and family, in a manner so disgraceful, should have strength of mind to write such a note, so conformable to her own ideas of propriety; that a mind so vitiated in its own practices, could so charmingly dictate to that of another, was a contradiction she could not reconcile; and the warmth of her temper never suffering her either to be a moderate friend, or placable enemy; her partiality for Anna, and in the same degree her anger to those who had, as she instantly believed, falsely accused her, returned: but the situation of her daughter-in-law, young, fatherless and motherless, deserted by her husband at so early a period, which she
found

found to be too truly the case, affected her exceedingly.

His propensity to gaming, which he had always secretly indulged, was now public; he was married to one woman, while his heart preferred another; that other, the most likely, had he been united to her, to have drawn him from every evil habit; and, not obtaining her on the terms which only now was in his power to offer, as likely to make him desperately careless of the future; or, if he did gain her, no doubt could be entertained of her entire power over him.

Thus, then, Lady Cecilia found the bright prospects her imagination had formed, of seeing the honour and virtue of her ancestors perpetuated in her son, clouded by fears of a most alarming nature; the more painful, as she could not reveal them to either of the young ladies.

Mrs. Edwin's tears and distress, called for, and received every consolation maternal affection could offer; she assured her, and begged her to believe, a little time and experience, joined with the unbating tenderness of so charming a wife, must have its weight in the mind of a sensible man: and with respect to this paper, added she, darting an angry look at her daughter, which your officious, and I wish I could say well-meaning curiosity, has exposed, for God's sake destroy it; no one reprehensible thought is here seen on the part of Anna Mansel: you find, the only degree of blame she can incur in the transaction, by clandestinely corresponding with Edwin, is done away in her note: should your brother, Miss, know of the liberty you have taken with his letter, he would not incur my censure by putting a repetition of such a breach of the laws of honour out of your power, by forbidding you his house.

This

This threat had more weight than any other part of the conversation on the two ladies ; the idea of separation was not to be borne. Young Edwin did not intend to return to Wales this summer ; if he quitted London at all, it would be to a family mansion of his Lady's in Shropshire ; and, if Miss Edwin quarrelled with him, she must go with her silly mother, and be content to converse with her simple cousin Patty, or be chiefly alone : the first was a bore, the latter intolerable ; with a very ill grace, therefore, she consented to obey her mother, stipulating only, that Patty should be severely reprehended, and forbid, under pain of their general displeasure, ever more to repeat an act of such disobedience ; in this she was indulged : as Lady Cecilia was very angry with Miss Herbert, the prudence of Anna but aggravated her offence ; and though she did not think it necessary to reveal it to them, she had serious apprehensions of her son's conduct. In her heart she yet esteemed our heroine, and would have gladly re-instated her in her family, but at present it appeared totally improper.

She therefore sent for Mrs. Herbert and her daughter, and in the presence of Mrs. Edwin and Cecilia, treated her with less tenderness and more asperity, than she had ever done, or indeed, had occasion to do, before.

Mrs. and Miss Edwin then left them, haughtily returning Mrs. Herbert's civilities, and totally overlooking those of her daughter.

Mrs. Herbert, with all the eloquence of grief besought her sister to forgive the poor girl for what had happened ; and Patty joining her supplications, Lady Edwin was soon appeased.

Seeing they still appeared very dispirited, she inquired with great tenderness into the cause—Mrs. Herbert, with looks of sadness and despair, kept
silent ;

silent ; but Patty bursting into tears, informed her Mr. Herbert had been that morning arrested for a debt of seven hundred pounds, contracted by Mrs. Nichols ; and that he was carried at his own request to the King's-Bench prison, as he said, he was wholly without resources to pay that and many other demands he expected would be made on him.

Not less surprised than affected, Lady Edwin affectionately embraced them, saying she never should forgive herself for aggravating at such a period, the distress they were in ; she insisted, as she did not know how Sir William would chuse to act towards Mr. Herbert, to take on herself the government of them, and that they should directly send for what things they had at their lodgings, and ordered the maid who attended them to follow ; the man, she supposed, her master might want.

Mrs. Herbert and her daughter were too little accustomed to such scenes, not to rejoice at leaving a place where they had suffered such mortification and disgrace : their baggage was soon removed, and before night they were comfortably settled in Grosvenor square ; Lady Edwin omitting no one thing that could alleviate their distress ; but Sir William was inexorable to Mr. Herbert, nor would hear of his affairs, except he would relinquish that estate it was no longer in his power to keep, to his son, on which terms he offered once more to pay off the mortgage.

This was refused with scorn by Mr. Herbert ; whose mistress being removed with him into the liberties of the prison, said he wanted nothing of them.

Sir William, enraged at his hardened villany, refused to hear even his beloved sister, in behalf of a man so lost to every sense of honour ; and to
avoid

avoid any farther sollicitations he was pre-determined to reject, prevailed on Lady Edwin to leave town immediately: Mrs. Herbert declined accompanying them; she had hitherto fulfilled, to the utmost of her power, her conjugal duties, nor could she now, in the hour of distress, notwithstanding his libertine conduct, prevail on herself to desert her husband. He had forbid her coming to him, but she chose to stay within reach of serving the father of her children.

C H A P. LV.

Broken Bones.

YO U N G Herbert, whose ill state of health prevented his being at Mr. Edwin's wedding, was sent for to town on this grievous occasion—Though fond of his mother, whose idol he was, and always feeling for her ill treatment, he did not think himself excused by the bad opinion he entertained of the morals of his father, from paying his duty to him as his son.

Indeed that unhappy man had ever treated each of his children with indulgence and tenderness, though he so blindly ran on in actions he well knew must in the end ruin their fortunes. Mrs. Herbert's jointure was all that was left of the wreck of their once affluent circumstances—He had never proposed to her parting with that; and if he had, her strong maternal feelings would have

have refused a sacrifice for which her dear boy would suffer.

Charles found his father in a situation which wrung his soul, in a paltry lodging at a grocer's shop, up one pair of narrow stairs, in dirty linen, and unshaved face. At a table, with his bottle before him, sat Mr. Herbert; his once handsome person lost in the slovenly disguise of inebriety and indolence—On one side sat his mistress, with two of her children, on the other a man in naval uniform; they were in a roar of mirth, when the appearance of young Herbert, in whose countenance the distress of his mind was visibly pictured, brought the blush of shame into his father's cheek, and imposed silence on his companions—Charles was at first only sensible of the dreadful change in Mr. Herbert's circumstances; to visit him in prison, and to know that his vices brought him there, were facts that at once filled him with compassion and shame—but the changed figure of a beloved parent, took from him all power of reflection.—In the effusions of filial tenderness, he remembered only the wretched fate of his father, without thinking on the iniquitous life in which it had originated.

Mr. Herbert was not an ill-natured man; the agony in which he beheld a son, of whom he had been always proud, brought to his mind in full force, the injuries he had done his family; shame and grief overwhelmed him; and when Charles, with solemn respect, asked if nothing could be done to relieve him from a state equally distressing and disgraceful, he hid his face and wept aloud.

A pause ensued.

Young Herbert had then a view of his father's companions—he recollected Nichols when she waited on his mother; a glow of indignation
took

took possession of those features which but a moment before expressed nothing but duty and affection—Darting a contemptuous look at her, he bid her leave the room—She, heated with liquor, refused to obey him; on which, forgetting the respect due to his father's presence, he rose to turn her out.

Nichols was violent in her temper, and virulent in her language, her rage increased with her resistance, her outcries brought the man whom she called brother, to her assistance; he was a stout, ill-looking fellow, about thirty-five, and made up to Herbert in a threatening posture—The young man, whose natural strength and courage was increased by a sense of a father's ruin and a mother's injuries, that mother, now full in his mind, with all her sorrows about her; bursting with rage and anguish, as an object more suitable to him, he instantly let go the woman, and seizing on her champion, threw him down stairs where he lay senseless.

The alarm given by such an affair was soon spread; a surgeon was immediately sent for, who found his collar-bone broke, and one hip dislocated, and, moreover, from the habit of body he was in, pronounced him in the utmost danger; the woman tore her hair, and ran about distracted, vowing she would have blood for blood.

Those threats from one he well knew capable of putting them in execution, struck Mr. Herbert to the soul; it was in vain he implored her to be calm; to wait the event, and to have in consideration, that it was *his son* she so violently vowed to be the destruction of.

Instead of the effect he wished his entreaties to have, it only exasperated her more, and several expressions she let drop, giving him reason to suppose her concern was for a person criminally dear

to her, though he had been looked on, and supported by him as her brother, he threw himself into the arms of his son, "Oh! Charles, Charles, canst thou yet bear the presence of a father, who, for that devil, has brought thy amiable mother, thy lovely sister, and thyself to ruin; who, for her, and for wretches like her, has entailed poverty and dependence on his posterity; and who now, by the vile excess of wickedness, has perhaps brought his only son to an untimely end."

"Fly, Charles! leave me, while yet the confusion and the absence of that fiend will admit it—save, for the sake of thy poor mother, a life of such consequence to her; let not my crimes drive her to madness; let them not rob my innocent Patty of her only protector."

Charles, his heart wrung by the grief of his father, and shocked at the likely consequences of his rashness, yet felt a joy not to be described, at this confession of his sense of the errors of his life; he entreated him to be comforted; now, that he was sensible of the wrong steps he had taken, fortune would again smile on him.

Oh never, never, answered the distracted man!—Go, go, my dear, my noble son—if thou would'st not rob me of my senses, let me know thee out of danger:—swear thou wilt instantly quit the kingdom:—trifle not with my agony; leave me, I command thee, this instant, if (running to his pistol) thou would'st not see me add suicide to my other sins.—Terrified at this threat, he swore to obey him.

The vile woman had now left the room, to assist in carrying up the man; in the confusion and hurry it was therefore possible to pass unnoticed. "Fetch another surgeon," said Mr. Herbert to his son, "this moment." On that pretence, he passed

passed the people in the house, and, what was still more lucky, the constables who had been sent for on the first alarm by the outrageous Nichols.

When he reached the opposite side, he looked up at his father's apartment where he saw him standing watching eagerly whether he had escaped, which finding he had effected, he waved his hand, pointing to the South, meaning for him to go to France: this he resolved to do, but he had matters to settle, of more consequence to him than even the preservation of existence; his mother's weak health and spirits must be armed for the news, and there was *one* more person he wished not to leave England without seeing.

He had heard from his sister, of Anna's disgrace in Grosvenor-square; the vices laid to her charge he gave not the least credit to, but he was not so clear in his suspicions of her connection with Edwin, which he was now confirmed in, by hearing of the note he conveyed to her, from his sister.

Attached to her from principle, as well as passion, which had increased in every interview, he found himself unable to conquer his prejudices in her favour.—Notwithstanding so many reasons to think with less respect on a woman of doubtful character, his partial fancy wandered over her perfections, and dwelt so strongly on her charms; reason, reflection, nor the insuperable bars of fate, had power to lessen her empire over his mind.—Though his peace was destroyed, and his health impaired by the continual struggles of hope and fear in his bosom, he at last stole from Oxford, and (what mystery will not love develop) traced Miss Mansel to Dalton's: it was at this period he made his acquaintance with Collet, with whom he regularly corresponded; it was him he wanted to

see in the first instance ; and, as he was going, perhaps for ever, to endeavour to obtain one interview with Anna, merely to catch a last look, to confess to her his hopeless love, and to try to prevail on her, for her own sake, to return to Parson Mansel's, and to bid her adieu for ever !

He crossed the water, and taking a coach from Tower Hill, arrived at Layton the very day after Anna left it. Collet gave him a most friendly reception, and told him he had just wrote an account he was sorry to give him of Miss Mansel.

Mr. Herbert's countenance, when he entered, was flushed, partly with the agitations of his mind, and partly with the idea in which he had indulged himself, of venting a passion that destroyed him, at the feet of the object who had inspired it, changed to a deadly pale, not daring to ask what he dreaded to hear, for however strong appearances were against our heroine, the rooted good opinion and respect which her constant society and conduct had given him at Llandore, and the established amiable character she bore during her residence there, as well as the love expressed for her by so good a man, and so worthy a woman as the rector and his wife, together with the secret hope which ever accompanies a lover's wish, had always flattered him she might yet be innocent, though not for him.

But now Collet's dismal countenance, at once the ensign of pity and ill news, shocked him beyond the power of utterance ; after a little pause, however, his reason resumed its sway, and he heard the account of her elopement with emotions of sorrow, in which compassion was visibly blended ; he regretted her not being followed, though now all doubts of her seduction by Edwin were at an end. Those only who have felt every joy blasted, every wish frustrated, can form an idea of the distress of
mind

mind he laboured under at this moment ; his heart died within him ; the thoughts of flying to the continent no longer engrossed his attention ; of what value was life to a man deprived of the wretch's last resource, hope ? He revealed to Collet the accident that happened to him, and the consequences he had such reason to apprehend from the effects of his passion.

Collet now turned as pale in his turn. "What," cried he, "can you then so coolly talk of an event that may bring you to an untimely death ? why, for God's sake, are you here, why do you not leave the kingdom ? But stay, where is the man do you say ? Here, write, write directions ; and, Lord have mercy upon us, what will become of your friends ? you say you have a mother ? you are too much in love to think of her, I suppose.—Come, let us go," putting on his hat.

Herbert, whose filial attention had been wholly lost in the despair which seized him on Collet's account of Anna, now, indeed, remembered he had a mother, one whose life hung upon his welfare, and a sister who doted on him ; he therefore gratefully accepted of Collet's offer to accompany him to town to visit the man, and to render him any farther service the exigency of the case required.

When they reached the Borough, Collet alighted, and Herbert went on to the London coffee-house, as a place less likely for him to be known, in case of the worst, than any one in the vicinity of St. James's end of the town. When Collet arrived at the grocer's, he inquired for Mr. Herbert, and was most agreeably surpris'd to hear he had gone from thence, having sent for his lawyer, and removed himself to the Fleet ; his next inquiries were of Mrs. Nichols and her brother.

"Brother !"

“ Brother !” answered the woman of the house,
“ the fellow she calls so is bad enough I believe,
“ and she suffers enough for him ! but I assure
“ you, Sir, though I let lodgings, if I had known
“ she was not Mr. Herbert’s wife, she should not
“ have set her foot here ; it was not the act of a
“ gentleman to bring such a creature to any honest
“ house, when he had got so good a lady and
“ sweet children——Poor dear gentlewoman,
“ ’twould have melted a heart of stone to have
“ seen her and her daughter, lamenting over each
“ other, and falling on their knees to pray the son
“ might get out of the kingdom, for the doctor
“ says, the man will certainly die.”

Collet could bear to hear no more ; he inquired where the surgeon lived, and having got directions, waited on him immediately ; he happened luckily not only to be a skilful, humane man, but one who had walked the hospitals with Collet, and was an old acquaintance——He gave him every light into the man’s situation in his power, and concluded by saying, if it was possible to keep the woman from him, he should hope to lower the fever ; and, in that case, the thigh being reduced, and the bone set, he might recover ; but though he had told her the evil consequence which would certainly follow her obstinately disturbing him with her turbulent grief, he had not been able to prevail on her to leave him.

At Collet’s desire they went there, and being shewn into a room adjoining that where the patient lay, heard Nichols in a loud key, between crying and scolding, vowing revenge against the murderer of her dear Jack.

She was informed the doctor wanted to speak with her ; when she made her appearance, he begged her to think on the advice he had given her,
and

and if the life of the sick person was really dear to her, to permit him to be quiet.

Collet was a very good surgeon, apothecary, and man-midwife ; he was more, he knew a little smattering of the law, which he had picked up in his youth at the house of an uncle who was of the profession.

The landlady entering with very little ceremony, at this moment, to demand her rent, and at the same time to require security for what might become farther due before the man would be fit to remove if he recovered, Collet asked who had taken the lodgings ? Mr. Herbert was the answer.—

“ This lady, then, can have no right here,” said he ; “ I will pay what may be due from that gentleman ; you must yourself determine whether, when I discharge the apartment, you will accept this lady for your tenant.”

“ Not for the world,” answered the woman ; “ the best ladies, whose misfortune it is to be obliged to live in the rules, occupy my apartments ; I have no occasion to take in cast mistresses.”

Nichols, whose cunning equalled her wickedness, for the first time now thought of the unthrifty game she was playing.

Mrs. Emmerson, indeed, knew well enough, from the beginning, the character of Nichols ; but while her lodgers paid beforehand, and spent with profuseness, money, which, if properly applied, would go far towards satisfying their creditors, it was her way to be the most servile and fawning of creatures ; but when it was no longer in their power to feed her unbounded avarice, no one knew the art of changing sooner or with so little ceremony.

Mrs. Herbert, the lawful wife, with her daughter, whose appearance in their undress was elegant
and

and genteel, and in a carriage, (one of Mr. Edwin's) which was splendid, were objects of infinitely more consequence, to her, than Nichols, now abandoned by her keeper, although she had maintained, at a most extravagant rate, all the family, from the time they had been in the lodgings; this the wretched woman felt, and though she was not so destitute of the means to insure respect as her landlady supposed; the idea of being debarred from seeing her quondam brother, brought her to an humble sense of her situation; she promised if she was suffered to continue there till Tyrrel could be safely removed, she would not enter his room without their leave.

On this, Mrs. Emmerson was promised payment of every expence that should be incurred, and the two surgeons then visited the patient.

They found him with every symptom of an inflammatory fever, restless, and apparently in great agony, yet sensible. He asked with eagerness if there were any hopes of his recovery? Mr. Walker told him, and it was confirmed by Collet, that all depended on his being kept quiet.

After a little pause, "Then," said he, "gentlemen, you admit it to be doubtful, and that is enough to give me warning that I shall soon be called upon to answer at the bar of heaven, for the sins of my past life: while I have my senses, then, let me make all the atonement *now* in my power, for the injury I have done the gentleman, who, if I defer it, and die, must suffer for an act to which I provoked him."

Mr. Walker would have advised him to compose himself for the present, alledging the certainty there was of the least agitation increasing the fever; but Collet, who thought if he expired as soon as his confession was ended, it was of far less import than keeping one moment in suspense
the

the safety of such a man as Charles Herbert, ran out of the room, and in a second returned with pen, ink, and paper, and advising him to encourage those repentant thoughts, sat down with great gravity to take his confession.

Nichols, too guilty not to be alarmed at Collet's conduct, rushed fiercely in, demanding what they were at? Her presence visibly disordered the sick man; he begged she might be sent out of the room, and Collet seizing her, not in the most gentle manner, forced her into an adjoining apartment, locked her in, telling her in a determined voice, if she attempted to interrupt them again, she should instantly be turned out of the house. He returned then to his office, and took down the following particulars, given at broken intervals of pain by the patient:

“ James Tyrrel voluntarily confesses, he lived
 “ fellow servant with Elizabeth Nichols, by whom
 “ he had a child, before she waited on Mrs. Her-
 “ bert, on which account he absconded; and en-
 “ tered on board a man of war; that finding Mr.
 “ Herbert had taken Nichols into keeping, and
 “ that he was a man of interest, he applied to his
 “ old friend, who was rejoiced to see him, and in-
 “ troduced him to Mr. Herbert as her half brother,
 “ and prevailed on him to get him a gunner's war-
 “ rant; that they renewed their connection when-
 “ ever he could leave the ship, which having done
 “ once too often, he was broke; since which they
 “ had mutually agreed to make up a sum of
 “ money and elope from Mr. Herbert; that they
 “ had succeeded so far as to realize two thousand
 “ pounds, and the next morning (now they had
 “ got all there was to be had) was fixed for their
 “ departure when the accident happened which
 “ is like to end in this criminal's death; but the
 “ said James Tyrrel solemnly declares, in the
 D 5 “ presence

“ presence of Josiah Walker and Jeremiah Collet,
“ that he first assaulted Mr. Herbert, without
“ any provocation whatever, and he is sure that
“ gentleman was wholly innocent of any designs
“ against his life.”

With this paper as soon as signed and witnessed, which was done in the presence of Emmerfon and his wife, who were summoned for the occasion, Collet was in such a hurry to get away, that he forgot to liberate the lady, or to get into a coach he had ordered to be called, but ran away to the London coffee-house, where he found Mr. Herbert, with a packet of letters before him, sealed and directed, and himself ready to set out.

Collet congratulated him on the good news he had brought, and shewing him the confession of Tyrrel, now averred there was no occasion for him to leave his friends and country.

It is not to be doubted but Herbert was glad to find the black and abhorred crime of premeditated murder was not attributed to him; but acquittal of this, and every other error of his nature, could not give peace to his bosom; there the seducing form of Anna for ever dwelt. Reason nor philosophy could reconcile him to her loss, which every moment afflicted him beyond the last.—His heart sunk when he reflected on her present situation; he had considered and re-considered how he could exist, breathing the same air with her, for ever lost to him—having concluded it impossible, he resolved to leave the kingdom, and when on the Continent, write to his friends for leave to continue some time abroad previous to his entering the Temple.

Collet's intelligence, therefore, had not the effect he expected; Herbert found his mother had been at Emmerfon's, and that she concluded him gone; the reason he chose to assign for parting was, he thought

thought best avoided ; and having given his friend those reasons, and engaged his correspondence, he sent for a chaise and set off for Dover.

Collet, from the time he had left home, till the present moment, had never bestowed a thought on Layton ; but the instant he had done the last friendly office for Herbert, and had seen him from the door, it occurred to him, that he had three women from each of whom he was in hourly expectation of a summons, two men in fevers, and a boy with a broken leg, every one of whom he ought to have visited that evening, and that he had left home without the least intimation of where he was going or when he should return ; he had also promised Charles to wait on Mrs. Herbert in the morning, and inform her of all that had passed at Emmerson's, but without hinting that he had seen her son, or on what occasion ; immediately then throwing himself into a post-chaise, he returned to Layton.

C H A P. LVII.

Lady's Dressing Room.

IT was broad day when the Doctor reached his own house, which was in no small confusion on account of his absence ; finding he had not been particularly wanted, he retired extremely fatigued, and enjoyed the heavenly repose a sense of having acted under that divine command of loving our neighbours as ourselves, and doing unto all men as we would they should do unto us, insures.

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The next morning brought Mrs. Wellers, among the rest of his friends, to inquire by what sudden power Collet had vanished ; her, and her only, he made acquainted with the whole affair, shewed her the letters he promised to deliver, and which he intended going to town to do as soon as he had been round to visit his patients.

The one directed to Mrs. Herbert in Grosvenor square, caught her eye ; she told him she had two days ago been twice there, and was assured all the family had left town. But as I have not informed my reader of the success of that lady's inquiries after my heroine's character, I must account for some part of her behaviour, by doing it now.

She went, her son escorting her, to Sir William Edwin's, where expressing much disappointment at hearing they had left town, the servant told her young Mr. Edwin lived in Portman square. They drove there—the ladies were not stirring—they asked what time they would be visible ? about two o'clock—At two they returned, and were ushered through a suite of magnificent rooms, into one, in which sat Mrs. Edwin and Cecilia, attended by Frajan, who was now equally the favourite of both sisters.

Mrs. Wellers' curiosity was excited about those young ladies more from the reports of others than any thing she had heard from Anna ; her grateful remembrance of the former kindness of that family had sealed her lips, respecting any ill qualities Miss Edwin might be subject to ; as to Mrs. Edwin she was in a manner a stranger to her ; but such very fine ladies could not but be famous ; they led the mode ; the Edwin cap, hat, shoe, and fash, were universally wore.

They were sitting on white satin Ottomans, a superb breakfast equipage before them ; the room breathed perfumes ; it was decorated with the choicest

choicest and most beautiful flowers in the finest china vases ; the toilet magnificently set out with silver fillagree boxes ; and the assemblage of every elegance luxury could invent, or money purchase, were here in the height of profusion.

Mrs. Edwin's dress was a beautiful spotted gauze chemise lined with pale pink persian ; Cecilia's the same, with the difference of a laylac lining.

But peace dwelt not on the brow of the fair mistress of this elegant mansion ; a fretful fullness clouded her features ; not in the possession of her husband's affections, she despised the ridiculous advice of her mother-in-law, and scorned to court, where her vanity told her she ought to be courted ; her house was a continual scene of dissipation ; yet there she was restless and dissatisfied ; her delicate constitution began to suffer from the fatigue of following each fashionable resort in search of happiness, and this morning her eyes were sunk languidly in that head, which still violently ached, from the late hours of the preceding evening.

Miss Edwin was more gay ; she had attracted the notice of a man of fashion and quality, who had looked and swore enough to gratify any coquette alive.

Mrs. Wellers being received with great politeness and seated, opened her business ; it was (Lady Edwin not being in town) to inquire the character of a young person who lived with her as companion, a Miss Mansel.

Mrs. Edwin, indisposed and out of spirits before, appeared greatly affected at the name, and presently burst into tears ; the sadness of her appearance, amidst so many sources of pleasure had sensibly struck Mrs. Wellers the moment she came in, and to find the cause originated with her favourite, not a little shocked her.

Miss

Miss Edwin immediately answered her inquiries, in a manner the reader will expect. Frajan was ready not only to confirm but invent; and Mrs. Wellers appearing a very good sort of a woman, was told in confidence they had every reason to suspect Mr. Edwin now actually kept the object of her inquiry.

Mrs. Edwin's tears flowed afresh at this part of the story; and Mrs. Wellers shocked, mortified, and disappointed, took her leave.

When they were in the carriage, as she began to express her distress at what had happened, Mr. Wellers, without the least change of countenance, declared his resolution of never taking any one into his house without a good character, be their appearance ever so specious.

As they drove on she ruminated on what had passed and all she had heard; but when she came to compare the actions she had been told of, with the ingenuous look, the elegant manners, and refined sentiments of Anna, such a flagrant contradiction she was astonished at; and recollecting how inconsistent with their account of her had been the behaviour she was accidentally witness to when Edwin visited her, her partiality returned, and rendered Miss Edwin's character of Anna incredible; she once more went to Grosvenor square, in order to get directions to write to Lady Cecilia, and resolved to avoid coming to a final eclaircissement with Anna till she heard from her.

Again she questioned the servants very closely about any of the family's being in town, and again she was as stoutly answered in the negative; so that the letter to Mrs. Herbert there, might well surprise her, though the elopement of our heroine, with the absence of Mr. Edwin from home, and the positive asseverations that he was in the village, left

left it but too probable all she had heard was true, which was agreed to by Collet, whose attachment to Herbert was evinced by the concern he felt. Strolling home, she called at Dalton's, merely by the way of hearing the chat of the day. Mrs. Dalton was crying; the disappointment of her hopes, and the uncertainty of what was become of Anna, extremely affected her; and the cautious husband not being in the way to prevent her, she told Mrs. Wellers the whole story of Lord Sutton's love for Anna, and the great offers he had made her.

Mrs. Wellers was dumb with astonishment,—she could not believe it; the letter he had sent to Anna she had left carelessly on the table, where Mrs. Dalton had found it; it was produced as evidence of the truth of her assertion.

“Good God!” exclaimed Mrs. Wellers, “what wickedness lurks under this mystery; can it be —can a nobleman wish to marry, can he court in an honourable way, a young person he has himself known to be an impostor, a thief?”

“Who a thief, Madam?” answered Mrs. Dalton, colouring; “not Anna, nobody can accuse her, I am sure, of such an act; I will pledge my life for her principles in every respect; very bad things have been said of her in this wicked village; but she is as innocent, Madam, as a new born infant, wherever she is.”

“Will you permit me, Mrs. Dalton, to take this letter with me? It will help to clear Miss Mansel, if she is innocent, of many a vile imputation.” Mrs. Dalton agreed to it, and Mrs. Wellers took it home with her.

In the greatest astonishment she read it over and over; and, in turning it, found the rough draught of

of Anna's answer; spight of her elopement, spight of the words and honour of two ladies of the ton, and a French waiting woman, Mrs. Wellers gave way to a benevolent joy; such a proof of the innocence of her dear girl, was, she said, the strongest cordial to her spirits.

She sent for Bently—he was gone to London, and had not been at home all night; Collet was next acquainted with this extraordinary circumstance; he took a copy to send to Charles, and the original to shew Mrs. Herbert, with which he set off to town; first going to the Borough, where he heard that Nichols, finding that she was discovered, had decamped very early that morning, and Tyrrel was in a fair way of recovery.

C H A P. LVIII.

The fond Mother.

FROM the Borough Mr. Collet went to Grosvenor Square:—Mrs. Herbert was at first denied, but on his saying that he brought letters from her son, he was instantly admitted; here he found a gentleman, blending his tears with those of the distracted mother and daughter.

Mrs. Herbert was leaning back in an arm chair, the picture of silent woe, the big tear in speechless agony rolling down her pale cheek; while Patty, whose face rested on her folding arms as she sat at the table, audibly sobbed.

The gentleman who appeared extremely affected, arose the instant Collet entered; “We fear,
“ Sir,

“ Sir, to ask you the news:—is the villain yet living? is Mr. Herbert safe?” “ Oh!” cried the fond mother, who could now speak, “ say it, say it, but my son, the pride of my life, the darling of my soul, is safe, out of the reach of that malignant fate he inherits from his mother, and while I live I will revere you as my good angel.” Miss Herbert involuntarily advanced, and, catching hold of his hand, burst into a fresh flood of tears. Collet was too much affected to answer: he felt for the letters; and, in his hurry to deliver the one he had received from her son for her, he gave into the hand of the gentleman the one he had wrote to send to Herbert, with copies of Lord Sutton’s letter and Anna’s answer, which he had not yet sealed, reserving it to tell him of his journey to Grosvenor Square.

Mrs. Herbert waited tremblingly to know the contents, and Patty eagerly looked over his shoulder, but the surprize of each was equal, on finding it addressed to Charles, and full of Anna;—Patty coloured; the gentleman turned pale.

“ Ah!” cried Mrs. Herbert, “ why are you so much affected!—Tell, tell me the worst, that if my son must die, I may resign to my own fate:”—He begged her not to be alarmed; and, turning to Collet, “ You have, I believe, Sir,” said he, “ made some mistake in this letter,” returning it.

“ Oh, Cot so!—so I have,” answered the Doctor, colouring, “ this is Mrs. Herbert’s,” giving the right, and one to Miss Herbert.

“ But where, where is he, Sir?”——

—“ In France, by this time.——”

“ God be praised,” said Mrs. Herbert, falling on her knees; “ spare, spare and bless him, O merciful God; once more let me fold him with safety and honour to my bosom, and dispose of
“ the

“ the miserable remnant of my days, as thou
“ see’st fit.”

The doctor was too much affected to assist Wilkinson in lifting her up, who, when she was re-seated, at her request, her own eyes being blinded with tears, read Mr. Herbert’s letter, which was as follows :

“ When I parted from the best of mothers, this morning, how little did I foresee the possibility of any event which could turn the desired presence of her son, into so dreadful an aggravation of her distress: arm your heart, my beloved, my ever honoured mother, with that firm confidence in heaven, you have all your life, both by precept and example, taught your children; fear not but I am too sensible of the very few comforts left you, not to take the greatest care of my own preservation; I am sure I am safe; the virtues of my mother are my shield and defence.

“ Forgive, dearest madam, the unjustifiable rashness that has (though on my part perfectly undesigned) in all probability robbed a fellow creature of his existence, I know your prayers will be incessantly offered for me; and I trust, should the *worst* happen, the imputation of murder will not rest on *your* son.—My unhappy father! what shall I say of him? Would to God he could see his error, all might yet be well. Be happy, my ever loved mother; grieve not, I implore you; this misfortune will be too heavy for me, if you bear it not with that firmness of mind which has hitherto supported you. As soon as I reach the continent I will write to Sir William, for his permission to finish my studies abroad; and, at every possible opportunity, gratify my own feelings in writing to you. Let me not forget what I owe to the bearer, Mr. Collet, who, in every sense of the epithet, has been

been the warm and disinterested friend of, dearest Madam,

Your dutiful
and affectionate son,

CHARLES HERBERT.'

This letter, which, wet with maternal tears, was put in Mrs. Herbert's bosom, gave a new turn to the countenances of all present. Patty said, her brother, her dear brother, had wrote charmingly to her, but it was not just now necessary her mamma should see his letter; she was already too much affected:—all acknowledged Collet's kindness; but when he came to Tyrrel's confession, their joy and gratitude were ungovernable:—Patty declared she would go to her papa that night. But this Mrs. Herbert opposed, as they knew not how he might be affected at the discovery; he may perhaps chuse, said she, to have as few witnesses as possible of his feelings. Mr. Wilkinson has business with him; if Mr. Collet will trouble himself to go with him, he will, or will not, tell all that has past in the Borough, as he judges best, from the disposition in which they find him.

Collet again forgot his patients and the village, but begged for a dish of tea. The ladies apologized for their neglect; and while they were taking it, he asked Mrs. Herbert, how she had heard of the disagreeable accident? she immediately handed him this note:

“ Deserving, unhappy woman, thy curses on me cannot increase my misery or despair; nor can the consciousness of thy own virtues give thee comfort adequate to thy sorrows. Our son, that dear faultless youth, irritated by the vices of his father, has forfeited his life to the laws of his country.

country. He has escaped for the present. Let thy prayers be offered to the God thou hast served, that he may be so fortunate as to get out of the reach of his pursuers:—thine may avail—*mine cannot.*”

C. H.

“ Oh !” said Patty, “ if you had seen us at the receipt of that shocking note ! but thank God (smiling through her tears) it is over : it was brought us at my cousin’s—we went directly in his chariot to the Borough—he was not at home, or I am sure he would have gone with us—and there an ugly woman ran on talking of every thing but what we wanted to know. Papa was gone, and they said the man was dying ; but, God be praised, it is over, and we shall never see that shocking place again. Only think, mamma, Mrs. Edwin has never sent, nor Miss Edwin !” “ Inhuman” cried Wilkinson, with indignation ; “ but come, Sir, we shall be too late.”

They left the ladies comparatively happy, and found Mr. Herbert surrounded with papers, a settled gloom on his countenance, and unshaved or dressed. When Wilkinson entered, a gleam of satisfaction beamed on his face, but quickly disappeared after the first salutation. Wilkinson said, “ an execution had been laid on the works, and that *he* was dispatched by the other partners to know what was to be done.”

Herbert was silent.

“ They are exceedingly distressed,” continued Wilkinson.

“ So am I,” was the answer. “ Have you seen Mrs. Herbert ?”

“ He had been there.”

“ Any

"Any news of my boy?" They told him he was safe, and Tyrrel recovering. Collet then gave an account of his visit in the Borough, and named Nichols.

"O! d—n her, d—n her," said he, in an agony.

Wilkinson took occasion now to expatiate on the sufferings, the merits, and the still warm affection, of Mrs. Herbert; and at the conclusion Collet produced the paper signed by Tyrrel. At the perusal of this he shrunk with horror, but said nothing. Wilkinson then asked "if he would permit Mrs. and Miss Herbert to visit him?"

"No, no," answered he fiercely, "let them stay till to-morrow; I have affairs to settle, and cannot be interrupted. You, Sir," said he to Collet, "have acted nobly by my son—you must do me the favour to wear this ring," taking a valuable diamond off his finger. Collet started back—to accept of such a present from an insolvent for business in the course of his profession, would have been considered by him as an act of injustice, and much more when it meant to pay for his friendship—he found himself hurt at the idea. Mr. Herbert, however, would not be refused; he insisted on his taking it, with a warmth that plainly shewed he thought himself offended by Collet's declining his offer. He therefore, with great reluctance, at last, put it on his finger, secretly resolving, however, it should return to the family.

As Wilkinson found Mr. Herbert in no mood to talk of business, he now proposed going; the leave they took of him was on his side solemn: he embraced Wilkinson affectionately—"Young man," said he, "I have been your friend; if, when I am
"no

“ no more, my family should want one, do not forget it.”

“ Never, Sir,” answered he, “ can I forget the many obligations I am under to you ; your interest, and that of your family, shall ever be mine ; I have no doubt but you will yet,” continued he, smiling, “ confer many more favours on me.” This was said as they were parting. Mr. Herbert instantly drew back and shut the door ; and Wilkinson then had the opportunity he longed for of enquiring after the fate of Anna.

Mr. Mansel had been laid up with the gout three months back ; his distress at not hearing from her was unspeakable, although he knew not she left the Edwins ; and Wilkinson was charged with a letter full of remonstrances at her unkindness. His surprize at hearing from Mrs. Herbert she was gone, and that they were ignorant of her present situation, was, as may be imagined, great, and his anxiety not less. She had been his first, and indeed his only love. While she was single there was a hope which he had fondly indulged. The discovery Collet’s mistake had made, was at once pleasing and painful : he was overjoyed to find, as he then thought, where she was ; and not a little hurt to see by the style of his letter, the Doctor looked on Herbert as her lover. As soon as he could resume the subject of the mistake in the letter which Collet had made, he informed him of his commission from her friend, and requested the favour of Miss Mansel’s address.

The Doctor, who had not the art of keeping secrets, in return communicated to him all that had come to his knowledge of Anna. No words can express Wilkinson’s astonishment, nor could any power on earth lessen his confidence in the honour
of

of her principles, or the purity of her heart. He heard with indignation the low scandal of the village, and with rage the accusations of theft confirmed by Lord Sutton. He swore to make him prove or eat his words:—But when he saw the hand writing of the despicable Peer, his proposal of marriage, and the rough draft of her answer, which proved she was sensible of the injuries he had offered her; he was with difficulty restrained from going that instant to his house. In the continuation of Collet's history, he learnt, to his great grief and mortification, she was now out of the reach of his inquiries: yet he determined, if possible, to find out her retreat, and to prevail on her to return to Mr. Mansel's.

They were on the point of parting, when who should dash by but Mr Bently; he stopped at sight of Collet.—“Can't find this girl, Doctor; can't find her (deliberately taking off his hat to cool himself) high nor low; I have walked over all the town, have run my head into all the Caribbee islands and blind alleys, as well as high streets, asked at every house with a bill up—all in vain; nay, I have had that puppy watched; he goes no where but to Parliament House, gaming-tables, and brothels;—A wise senator, ha! Doctor! but I won't go home until I do. And what do you think I'll do next? why I'll advertise her, with a handsome reward.” And away walked Bently.

“That,” said Collet, “is another of your friend's admirers.” Wilkinson, curious to know more of a being who appeared quite a character, would have detained the Doctor longer, but again recollection was the friend of his patients, and directly he took the road to Layton.

Wilkinson

Wilkinson returned to Bond-street; where having recounted the particulars that had passed with Mr. Herbert, it was agreed they should go next day to the Fleet, and endeavour to prevail on him to write to Sir William, who they made no doubt would then settle his affairs. "And if," said Mrs. Herbert, "at last he will be content at home, we will give up the house at Bath, and be happy at Llandore."

At supper he repeated to Mrs. Herbert what he had heard of Anna, great part of which she knew: but when he came to Sutton's honorable addresses, it required all her confidence in his veracity to induce her to give it credit. Patty on her part loved our heroine with an affection founded on the solid basis of esteem; she could easily credit every other circumstance that spoke to the honour of her friend, but this affair of Sutton's was almost incredible, even to her: indeed they both recollected his passion for Cecilia had not been lately heard of; but still for a man of rank to join with so poor an implement in debasing the character of a woman one moment, and the next offer her his name and fortune, were actions which, in their idea, exceeded probability. Wilkinson, in the honest warmth of his soul, avowed his intention of hunting the vile calumny to the bottom, that could brand a young creature, who was the sweetest emblem of virtue, with the practice of vice: no rank, age, or sex, he swore, should escape his inquiries, nor the dearest considerations on earth prevent his exposing, and as far as was in his power, punishing the perpetrators of so inhuman an act. Mrs. Herbert, however, intreated him to be tender, for her sake, of the Edwins.

C H A P. LIX.

An Affignation.

MR S. Herbert, who had not closed her eyes from the instant the danger of her darling son had reached her, retired, overcome with fatigue, before nine o'clock; and Wilkinson, not chusing himself to lose any time in town, as the company's affairs were so deranged, set out to visit some persons who had been very kind to him in his infancy, and for whom he had a great affection. They were people in rather low circumstances, whose regard had been of the utmost advantage to his early years, and to whom he had allowed something towards their maintenance; from the time he had begun to receive the pay of his own labour, and for the last two years, they experienced the sweets of plenty, having received, by his order, one guinea per week.

Crossing Oxford road, two ladies passed him very quick, and getting into a hackney coach, it was ordered, by a voice he was sure he knew, to drive to the park. The lateness of the hour, and their being without attendants, rather staggered him; yet, if ever he saw Miss Edwin, or heard her speak, it was her; a sudden impulse of curiosity tempted him to follow the coach, which, notwithstanding, being perpetually bid to drive on, went a very slow pace: they alighted at Spring Gardens, and the moon shining bright, he saw he was not mistaken; they were hardly entered the Park, when they were joined by two gentlemen,

men, and presently the ladies were divided, both couples appearing perfectly at ease with each other.

He could not possibly be with both parties, he therefore stuck to Cecilia, who he followed at a distance, and found the walk was to be the end of the present meeting; for in half an hour, the lady who had separated from them, called to the other to go; they parted with the gentlemen where they met, the salutations of both being in French, which Wilkinson did not understand. He could therefore make nothing out from what little he heard of their conversation; but certain of their persons, and Anna in his head, he thought as this was, perhaps, the only time he might have to speak to Miss Edwin, he would not let it escape; there was a mystery, an indecorum, in the interview he had been witness to, that gave him a courage he would, on any other occasion, have wanted in addressing Miss Edwin: but respect is incompatible with the discovery of a lady's intrigue.

On pretence, therefore, of assisting them to the coach, he affected to recognize Cecilia—Never was meeting with an old country acquaintance so *mal à propos*—Fain would she have denied herself, and finding that impossible, laughed at their being out alone so late. As a frolic, Wilkinson joined in their good humour, and jumped into the coach with them, protesting that his respect for her family would not suffer him to leave them unguarded at that late hour. Indeed he had other motives—he had an ardent wish to be admitted to half an hour's conversation with Miss Edwin; which, now that fortune had so particularly favoured him, by meeting her in such a situation, at such an hour, he hoped she would not refuse.

A coquette is a being whose passion for admiration increases with being fed; she is so well with herself,

herself, that if a man puts on a specious countenance in her presence, she sets him down as her own, and attributes the solemnity of his aspect to the passion she has inspired. Let him be gay, she exerts all her artifice and cunning to rob him of the free enjoyment of his own spirits. She never doubts his professions, because it is at first more generally her interest to appear the dupe of them. Her whole business with mankind is to insnare and deceive: and knowing the insignificance of her own character, putting flirtation out of the question, forms no expectation of being approached by the male sex on any other subject but love and admiration, or in any other stile but that of gallantry.

Miss Edwin perfectly recollected Wilkinson; but not sensible of any kind of business he could have with her, and her imagination ever on the wing for new conquests, she immediately concluded he was a victim to charms she believed irresistible. True, he was a low country fellow, a mere idiot; nevertheless if she could but get out of this scrape, his stupidity might amuse, and his oddity divert her. It would be pleasant to rob him of his peace, and delightful, by a shew of happiness, to lull him into misery. With this humane intention, she suffered him to press her hand; nor attempted to repulse the freedom of his address with any of her usual *bauteur*.

Her companion had not yet once broke silence, but sat trembling, in expectation of the event; while Cecilia, with an easy familiarity, entered into chat with the intruder; not once apprehending but she could frown him into obedience whenever it was convenient to dismiss him. She was mistaken; the low fellow was as invulnerable to her smiles as unawed by her

frowns, when it was intimated the ladies could now dispense with his attendance. Good humour, gravity, scorn, anger, nor serious remonstrances, had any effect on the vulgar creature!

He still persisted in seeing her home; and when there, having half an hour's audience—At last, “they were not going home.”—“No! for heaven's sake, where then?” “It could be nothing to him—It was very unlike a gentleman to be so troublesome.”—“He thought differently—When he had the honour of seeing Lady Edwin, which would be in the course of a month, and told her *when* and *where* he had met her daughter, she, he was sure, would never thank him for leaving her exposed to insults.”—“Well then,” cried Cecilia, peevishly, “we had some business at Madam Chambaud's in St. James's street, and the evening being fine, we were tempted to stroll out—our carriage will attend us there.”

The falsehood of this story was not calculated to inspire Wilkinfon with much respect for his fair companions: however, Cecilia promising solemnly to be at home to him at eleven next morning, he alighted; and keeping the carriage in view, saw them get out at the milliner's; where, soon after, an elegant *vis-à-vis* drew up, and the ladies having put off their calashes, got into it; of this carriage, as they drove very fast, he soon lost sight.

This incident made it too late to visit his friend in the city, and he returned to Grosvenor Square, where he was invited to take his bed.

C H A P. LX.

The Suicide.

WILKINSON, on his rising next morning, found the ladies ready dressed, and impatient to be gone.

“ I know not the reason,” said Mrs. Herbert, “ but instead of the quiet repose I expected after the blessed news of yesterday, which I hoped would have given me, what I have long been deprived of, a good night’s rest, I have been disturbed by the most horrid dreams, and waked in terrors not to be expressed—I fear that wretch, Tyrrel, is dead.”

Wilkinson and Miss Herbert did all they could to dispel those apprehensions; which increasing every moment, he proposed going round by the Borough, and calling at the grocer’s before they went to Mr. Herbert’s; just as their route was settled, Mr. Edwin was announced. That gentleman was a stranger in his own house; and his own family were the people he least thought of conversing with. His cloaths were kept and his servants resided there; but except to change them, or sleep off the intemperance of a frolicsome night, it was the last place he was likely to be seen at. Sometimes, but very rarely, he did Mrs. Edwin the honour of eating a silent dinner with her; and once or twice, being pressed to be of her party in the evening, expressed his extreme mortification and regret that an engagement prevented his having that honour; since which,
his

his happy wife had not troubled him or herself any more on the subject. He had heard with a *sang froid*, peculiar to the character of a modern fine gentleman, the situation of Mr. Herbert—Anna was still the object of his wishes; but his passions were now rather more interested in the division of a pack of cards, and the chance of the dice, than on all that woman could bestow. The obtaining her was attended with such trouble, which he hated, and so much time, of which he had not a moment to spare; that except now and then, when a very bad run at play, and the effects of constant dissipation and immorality in his course of life, brought something like recollection across him (which had been the case the day she quitted Layton) he seldom bestowed a thought on her.

But he could not so far entirely surmount every prejudice of his juvenile years, as to hear of the misfortunes of Charles with the same indifference. He had slept at home the last morning, and waking earlier than common, with the head-ach, his servant was summoned with tea, which while he was taking, without the least relish, merely to dispel the fumes of Champaign, Bates mentioned the story of the murder, Charles's flight, and Mrs. Herbert's distraction, with the usual additions and aggravations a tale generally meets in repeating.

He immediately threw off the languor to which he had devoted the morning, and, dressing with the greatest expedition, went to Grosvenor-square, where he was received with a gratitude and affection, that gave him the first sensible pleasure he had for some months experienced, except the four honours at a game at Whist, or a lucky cast of the dice; which, however, to
do

do him justice, he was seldom so happy as to encounter.

He took them in his carriage to the Borough ; and, during the ride, the warmth with which he espoused the cause of her son, made Mrs. Herbert and Patty eloquent in his praise.

Under the thick veil, which his unjustifiable pursuits spread over the mind of Edwin, there yet existed some of the principles of humanity, honour, and generosity. The happiness he saw he imparted, exhilarated his own spirits ; and the consciousness of being *now* on a laudable pursuit, relieved him from the *ennui* which, of late, never left him but at the gaming table, or a still worse place.

They found Mrs. Herbert had been a false prophetess ; for Tyrrel was better. He then accompanied them to the Fleet, Edwin promising every good office in his power for Mr. Herbert.

Mrs. Herbert, as I have informed my reader, had long lived on terms of the most miserable distrust of a husband she tenderly and passionately loved ;—Still he offended, and still he was forgiven ; till the consequence of his indelicate connections had injured her health ;—from that period she declined his bed ; and his conduct since had been so little adapted to heal the shock her virtues for him had received, that she had gradually felt herself superior to the man who was continually wounding her pride and affection. Time had blunted the edge of those injuries which had at first cut her to the soul : and she had long ceased to think on his course of living with any other uneasiness than what a good and generous heart ever feels for the internal peace of those they are connected with, and her fear for the future welfare of her family inspired :—His affairs were secrets to her, but when her interest was wanting
with

with her brother, which commission she cheerfully undertook, as they were always glossed over by some plausible pretext or other :—the hopes, therefore, of his reformation, gave her pleasure ; but the rapture of re-gaining his heart was out of her thoughts ; all her personal love for him was transferred to her children ; but duty and religion taught her to rejoice in his abandoning his errors, and induced her to adopt every mode of conduct towards him that could render the new path of honour delightful.

Patty loved her father ; and now that she could honour as well as love him, she should, she said, be the happiest girl on earth.

Wilkinson had reason, in point of interest as well as friendship, to wish it, and Edwin was resolved to relieve his uncle from his distress.—With these dispositions they approached the prison. When the coach drew up, the ceremony of unlocking the gates, struck Mrs. Herbert with a secret horror, and Patty gasped for breath. Wilkinson, observing how they were affected, proposed their staying in the coach, while he went up to apprise Mr. Herbert of their visit.

Edwin would have accompanied him, but Miss Herbert, frightened at the looks of the place, and the strange countenances she saw passing to and fro, caught hold of him, and begged him not to leave them. Several people were crowded round the door, and more were gathering. The elegant carriage which stood so near, was an object of curiosity :—The ladies pulled up the blinds next the door :—They knew not but the place was accustomed to be so thronged.

Wilkinson's stay being protracted beyond their ideas of any probable cause, Mr. Edwin offered to seek him. Still Patty clung to him in terror ; and
Mrs. Her-

Mrs. Herbert, again giving way to the forebodings of her affrightened imagination, waited in pale and dreadful suspense. The crowd increasing to quite a mob, with serious and earnest faces, Edwin begged them to suffer him to leave them a few moments:—he could form no idea of what detained their friend—but it was proper to enquire;—some accident might have happened to him;—therefore he was permitted to go, and the blind again drawn up.

In a moment, however, he returned with Wilkinson.

“ Oh, what has happened ! what dreadful news have you to impart ? ” cried Mrs. Herbert, in an agony, at sight of the terrified countenances of the two gentlemen ; and finding the coach turning from the prison, “ For the love of heaven, Sir,” said Patty, “ tell us the worst. Is my papa dead ! ” “ Why do we leave this horrid place without seeing him ? ”

“ Stop the coach, Sir,” said Mrs. Herbert, “ I insist on it, I will know the worst before I leave this spot.”

Wilkinson still sat in speechless terror :—Edwin, hardly able to articulate, begged them to be pacified and let the carriage drive on.

“ Ah no,” said Mrs. Herbert, “ I came to visit and administer consolation to my penitent husband. I will not return till I am sure he is out of the reach of my assistance, or till (which God forbid) I know he has returned to his errors, and refuses it.”

Finding it impossible to persuade her to return in uncertainty, the carriage stopped. “ Why don’t you speak, Mr. Wilkinson ? ” said she.

The tears which now flowed from his manly eyes gave him the power of utterance—he begged they would not ask what would shock them to hear.—

Mr. Herbert was really out of the reach of all assistance.

“What, is he dead then?” asked Mrs. Herbert, in a voice of anguish.

“Not dead—but past every kind of help.”

“Not dead! and shall I then turn my back on the father of my children while he has life?”
 “Open the door—I can, at least, receive his last breath.”

It was in vain to oppose her—she pushed on, followed by her daughter, through the croud, who, finding she was wife to the unhappy man, in respectful pity, let her pass. Wilkinson, with difficulty, got before her: she followed up the stone stairs to the door of the apartment to which he led.

There on a wretched bed, though the best in the prison, lay Mr. Herbert; his eyes half closed, his jaw fallen, and in the last pangs of death. Several good-looking men and one woman, were standing near the bed:—the curtains were open to admit the air—a silent horror seemed to reign in the minds of the spectators, who had been offering their unavailing assistance.

“Oh! Herbert, Herbert!” (said the distressed wife, sinking on her knees by the bed side, while Patty, not able to give a second look at the horrid spectacle before her, hid her face at the feet) “is it thus I see thee!—Are these the comforts I fondly promised myself from thy reformation!—Charles! Dear Charles!—Dost thou not know me?” (looking on him for some moments to see if he observed her).

“What is his disorder? Can nothing be done for him, Mr. Wilkinson, cousin Edwin? Gentlemen, are you of the faculty? can you do nothing for him?”

A sudden

A sudden alteration in the heavy breath of the dying man calling all their attention, at this instant they gathered round him. A gleam of sense had reanimated his last moment; his eyes were lifted up to the face of his injured wife.—While her tears were in big drops wetting his face as she hung over him, he fetched a deep sigh and expired.

Mrs. Herbert fainting in the arms of Edwin, and her daughter unable to move from the spot where she at first had sunk, were objects that affected all present. They were carried out of the scene of death into an apartment belonging to the keeper of the prison, and attended by the gentlemen of the faculty, who had been vainly called in to the dying man.

As soon as, by the humane efforts of the people about her, Mrs. Herbert recovered, she begged to know the particulars of the sad scene they had been witnesses to. In this, however, Mr. Edwin and Wilkinson positively refused to gratify her. Ignorance, indeed, of his last act of violence, was far more eligible than to be indulged in her request; and the reluctance every body expressed of entering into particulars, too fatally confirming her most dreadful apprehensions, she was prevailed on to return with Mr. Edwin, leaving to Wilkinson every care about the body.

Miss Herbert was so very mild in her own temper and disposition, and so little acquainted with the effects of desperation in others, she had no suspicion Mr. Herbert's death was attended with any other uncommon circumstances than its suddenness; and in this happy ignorance her friends wisely let her continue—she sincerely lamented her father, and grieved incessantly she had not seen him, to receive his last blessing before he had lost his senses.

Mr. Edwin

Mr. Edwin gave the strongest invitation to go to Portman Square; but Mrs. Herbert knew too well the unfeeling disposition of the ladies there to accept it; he therefore insisted on being her banker; and promising to save her the painful task of writing to Sir William, he left them.

In his way from them to Portman Square, the awful scene of the morning recurred to Mr. Edwin's recollection;—the dreadful finale of a man, whose life had been devoted to the same guilty pleasures he was himself a slave to, could not but shock him exceedingly. He had an engagement for that day at the house of a famous courtesan in high life, where he was to have had the honour of being in company with some of the first young men of the age, in point both of birth and talents; no disgrace following to either from the character of their hostess, who, added to her beauty, was mistress of every accomplishment, and every art to murder time and banish reflection:—but she was not now present; and her empire over the senses not being quite so strong in absence, as when the eyes were fascinated with her charms, he formed a resolution of staying at home the whole day; not doubting but on an occasion so solemn Mrs. Edwin would shut her doors.

When his servant attended him, his first question was after his lady and sister.

The man stared, so unusual was the least desire in either of this worthy couple to meet, that he doubted his senses; however, the uncommon gravity of his master convinced him he was in earnest.

“They were out.”

“Did any company dine there?” Frajan was asked.

“O yes; Count Maxwell and Col. Mendez.”

“Who the devil are they?”

“The

“ The gentlemen that dine here every day.”

Mr. Edwin now stared in his turn; but feeling more hurt and astonished than he chose to shew, only desired to know when his lady returned—and then performed his promise to Mrs. Herbert, of writing to his father all that had come to his knowledge concerning the death of Mr. Herbert.

Mr. Wilkinson soon after called, as Mr. Edwin had requested, to inform him of every circumstance he could learn respecting the deceased. He found that Mr. Herbert had been from the time of his moving to the Fleet Prison very busy in arranging his papers—that he went not to bed the night he came there—his servant, who had lived with him twenty years, had begged him to take some refreshment, but he could prevail for no more than a dish of coffee. The man said, that after Wilkinson and Collet had left him the night before, he had sat down with renewed eagerness to his papers, and having tied them up in separate parcels, with labels on each, which he finished about four in the morning, he told his servant he would then go to rest—that while he was undressing, he asked if he remembered his wedding? and being answered in the affirmative, he asked him, if, then, when he received the hand of Miss Edwin, he could have conceived he could ever arrive at such a callous piece of villainy as to ruin her and her children for such a wretch as Nichols? That finding by his master's voice and manner that he was greatly affected, he begged him to revert his thoughts from a subject so distressing, and call them to the happier prospects that certainly awaited his new sentiments—that he returned no answer, but ordered him to go to bed in a little closet adjoining his master's bed's head.—Finding him, as he thought, asleep this morning, he went very silently about his business,

business, and having got his chocolate ready, he sat in expectation of his waking—that at eleven o'clock he went to his bed side, and stooping to see if Mr. Herbert was awake, he perceived blood on the bed clothes.—He immediately alarmed the place; when they found the unhappy man had cut his wrist quite across the artery, and was yet bleeding, although life seemed to have deserted him. Every assistance was instantly procured—it was all too late—he was supposed to have been bleeding from the time his servant left him.

C H A P. LXI.

Modern Sensibility.

MR. Edwin was very much shocked at this tragical end of a man of pleasure. The conduct of Nichols was far from surprising him; he knew that women who once swerve from the paths of virtue, seldom, very seldom, stop at their first offence; and the dissipated life he led taught him daily to know, minds where honour and delicacy once reigned, but when vice triumphed in their stead, were the surest to be found in the opposite extreme, once made the prey of man. It is a kind of awful justice, every libertine knows, in the case of his companion, though vanity may blind him as to his own, that men should, in their turns become the prey of the unhappy wretches themselves have robbed

robbed of feeling and conscience; but that it should be the fatal means of such entire ruin was new and horrid; a transitory resolution to reform for the first time entered his mind——but how was it to be affected?

Anna, the sweetest model of every perfection, could she be procured, could his life of penitence be but begun by that one more sin, with her he could live sequestered from the whole world; his wife might enjoy his estate; a little, with Anna, would be the excess of luxury; from her sweet examples his mind and manners should acquire the semblance of worth and honour.

With these noble ideas of relinquishing vice, by plunging more deeply into it, of rescuing himself from the latent reproaches of a guilty conscience by the plausible excuse of his own happiness, he was interrupted by Wilkinson rising to take his leave. He would not however suffer him to go, but insisted on his dining, promising to accompany him to Mrs. Herbert's in the evening.

A loud rap announced the return home of the ladies, and Edwin instantly went to Mrs. Edwin's dressing-room. Her surprise at so unusual a visitor was manifested in her countenance; and a formal curtsy on her side being answered with as polite a bow on his, Edwin, with caution and politeness, briefly acquainted her with the catastrophe of the morning, and hinted how kind it would be in her to attend the mourners, and bring them home with her——said he was sorry to find she had company to dine with her, but he supposed he need not point out to her that decency required their doors to be shut for a few days.

Mrs. Edwin heard him with some degree of feeling and sorrow, till he came to the part which required her to deprive herself of the society she
liked;

liked ; but that was too much ; a woman of fashion is above all forms but those which, infringed, would lose her the first place at the gold table, or deprive her of the admiration of the multitude.

“ If Mr. Herbert had brought himself, by his folly, to ruin and death, what could that possibly be to her ? ”

“ Or if Mrs. Herbert chose to mourn at an event, which really she could not help thinking should have a very different effect, it could be no sort of reason why she should break all her engagements.”

“ Indeed the thing could not be done——
“ She had appointments for every hour on the succeeding week, not one of which she could break.”

“ And as to the friends engaged to dine there, they were men of rank ; one of whom had made overtures of marriage to Cecilia ; and as Mr. Edwin proposed a friend of his own being admitted, she saw no reason to exclude them ; more especially as it was not in her power to say she knew where a card would meet them at this time of day.”

“ Overtures of marriage to Cecilia ! Could such have been received with propriety, madam,” answered Edwin, “ without my knowledge ! ”

“ Oh, as to that, Sir,” said she, “ had it been possible to have known when and where to find you, Colonel Mendez would, I dare say, have paid you due respect.”

Edwin felt the truth of this reproach ; but the person who uttered it was equally an object of contempt and dislike ; her scornful air, therefore, as she turned to the glass, had no other effect on him, than increasing his disgust ; but the honour and
wealth

wealth of his family, perhaps likely to become the prey of some needy adventurer, filled him with concern, and he resolved to acquiesce with the visit, in order to judge of the merits of the lover, and the manner in which he was received. Coolly bowing, he told her, she would please herself, and he would have the honour of attending her in the drawing room at six o'clock.

When he rejoined Wilkinfon, he could not help mentioning this extraordinary conduct both of his sister and wife. The calamities of the day had entirely drove his appointment with Cecilia out of that young man's head; but the instant her name was mentioned, the adventure of the last evening, as well as his intention of standing forth the champion of Anna, returned to his memory.

As it wanted some time of their dinner hour, and his dress required alteration, he returned to Grosvenor Square, leaving Edwin fully determined now in earnest to pursue the only object on earth that appeared worth the trouble; he therefore ordered Bates to attend him early the next morning, intending to go to Layton; from whence he would not return till he had tried every argument which love and the offer of his large fortune could furnish him with.

C H A P. LXII.

Embarrassments.

AT the appointed hour the company met in Mrs. Edwin's drawing room, namely, the lady herself, Miss Edwin, a Mrs. Corbet, Count Maxwell, Colonel Mendez, Mr. Edwin, and introduced by that gentleman, lastly, Mr. Wilkinson.

Miss Edwin had flattered herself, by his not keeping his appointment, the boor was returned to the Welch mountains; her confusion and surprize, therefore, at the sight of him ushered in by her brother, was great, but not equal to his, on recognizing, in the person of Mrs. Edwin, her companion in the park; and in those of the two gentlemen, their escorts; a discovery that, in his ignorant way of thinking, did not at all speak to the credit of either party. Mrs. Edwin changed colour, as much as rouge an inch deep would suffer her; and indeed her confusion was so visible, Mrs. Corbet asked her if she was indisposed? The servant just shewing himself at the door, as the signal for dinner, happily relieved her from a question put with all the innocence in the world in mere malice.

The dinner passed without any of the party, except the one lady visitor, doing credit to the delicacies before them. Colonel Mendez found himself exceedingly embarrassed at the piercing black eyes of Mr. Edwin, who seemed to look into a soul not very well prepared for such a strict scrutiny. He had, indeed, never appeared to so little advantage

tage before his mistress. An air of constraint clouded the usual gaiety and ease of his mien—and strange as it actually was, he found himself at a loss for words.

The Count was guarded in every look and action; he was a very fine figure, polite and well bred, a foreigner by birth, though perfectly conversant with the English tongue; he appeared thoughtful and reserved.

Mrs. Edwin was at no time a woman whose talents would much adorn her elevated rank; she was now particularly deficient, and not a little by her behaviour did she add to the very poor opinion Wilkinson entertained of her.

Cecilia, spite of her coquetry, of the presence of her lover, and of the disagreeable rencontre with Wilkinson, could not entirely hide her emotions, at the animated account given of Charles Herbert; he was indeed *now* an indigent wanderer, his estate gone, his fortune ruined, himself and his family dependent on hers, there was no possibility of indulging her partiality for him; she could not be so mean; yet his person, his sentiments, his manners, recurred in the most pleasing forms to her imagination; she gave them a sigh:—what more has a coquette to bestow on the unfortunate?—and turned her willing ear to the flattery of the more prosperous Colonel.

The parade and ostentation of the meal, rendered still more tedious by the hurry every body seemed in to get it over, was at length removed.

Mr. Edwin was trying to draw the Colonel into a conversation he as industriously avoided, when Wilkinson, as the ladies were retiring, claimed Cecilia's promise of half an hour's audience.

A request so odd, at such a time, surprised her brother, and alarmed the lover; which he perceiving, as well as the young lady's embarrassment, added,

added, if it would not intrude on the etiquette of form, he would be glad it might be in the present company.

Cecilia, not daring either to deny or explain the manner in which the promise was obtained, silently suffered him to lead her to her seat, while Mrs. Edwin had recourse to her salts, which were brought in by Frajan.

Wilkinson's whole soul was in the cause of his beloved Anna ; he boldly and manfully expatiated on the beauty of her person, the extent of her understanding and on the graces of her mind ; he repeated many instances of the greatness of her soul, and the goodness of her heart ; he brought to the mind of Cecilia the virtue and integrity of her friend, Mrs. Mansel ; her upright conduct, and her unimpeached character ; mentioned it as the pride of his heart that it had been devoted to Miss Mansel, and as his severest affliction to have been rejected ; he followed her to London, when he found she might have been still more advantageously and more honourably established ; and then repeated the cruelty and injustice with which she had been treated ; told them the calumny she had lain under, both with respect to Mr. Edwin and other as infamous charges, in consequence of which, he added, in a voice choked with the feelings of his heart, she is at this moment a deserted, unprotected fugitive, without money, friends, or the means of procuring any : and then solemnly demanded of Miss Edwin her authority for the accusations she had thought proper to abet against a young person who had never offended her.

This application was seconded by Mr. Edwin, whose surprise is not to be expressed at the intelligence this harangue conveyed.

Miss Edwin rang for Frajan ;—that lady had wisely withdrawn herself ;—she was gone out.

“ What,”

“What,” said Miss Edwin, “without my leave? well, it is of no import; I believe I have evidence you will not dispute;” she then repeated, in her turn, all that Frajan had told her, and haughtily produced Lord Sutton’s card, in confirmation of Anna’s guilt.

“Whatever,” answered Wilkinson, “was the situation or distress of Anna’s infancy, I am clearly convinced the actions of her maturer years have been strictly consistent with the most immaculate honour; and here,” he continued, “is a proof, that whatever might be Lord Sutton’s sentiments, at that period, he has been convinced they were founded in error.”

To the unspeakable astonishment of Miss Edwin, and all present, he gave his Lordship’s offer of marriage into the hands of Mrs. Edwin, who could now attend to what was going forward; after perusing it, she hinted her suspicions of a forgery, in which Miss Edwin chose to accord, though in her own mind she was convinced not only of its authenticity, but of the injury done our heroine.

The hand and seal could not be counterfeits. Lord Sutton’s violent love fit for her had gone off in a manner no less sudden than surprising, and he had lately wholly declined visiting in Portman Square. Cecilia wanted not cunning—and her penetration at discovering schemes of iniquity was quick in proportion to her powers and inclination for forming them; it was therefore much easier for her to develope Lord Sutton’s motive, than to account for Frajan’s, of whose fidelity she had not a doubt.

Wilkinson asked for, and was permitted to retain, Lord Sutton’s card; and the ladies then retired, the gentlemen accompanying them, to their coffee, in order to attend them to the opera.

Mr. Edwin,

Mr. Edwin, too much taken up with his own affairs *now* to think of his sister's, very gladly suffered the gallant Colonel, for this time, to escape his farther observation; and the moment he could get rid of Wilkinson, his favourite servant was dispatched to Layton, to inquire into the truth of the anecdotes he had just heard; and as soon as he had given him proper instructions, followed Wilkinson, by appointment, to Grosvenor Square.

Mrs. Herbert's grief for the dreadful and sudden death of her husband was greatly mollified by her sense of the resignation due to the dispensations of that Being she truly served, without the parade or shew of being righteous over much—her concern for the welfare of her children was her first earthly object; and now that the unfortunate Mr. Herbert was no more, she considered their claim on her as doubled.

Mr. Wilkinson's attention to her and her interest, filled her with esteem and gratitude; he knew all Mr. Herbert's affairs at the works, and urged the immediate necessity there was for her presence at the castle; but there also was an execution as well as in the works; it was not, therefore, fit she should, in her present distressed state of mind, go there: yet something must be done; and although Wilkinson was loath to leave London without hearing some tidings of Anna, his own wishes gave way to his grateful desire of being of some use to Mrs. Herbert.

When Mr. Edwin came, he found him resolved on setting out for Wales as soon as the funeral of the deceased was over. This delay was rendered unnecessary by Mr. Edwin's promising to take on himself the whole direction of that, the care of Tyrrel, and every thing else in town, to render his aunt as easy as the recent calamity would admit. He accordingly took leave of them over night, in
order

order to go early in the morning; and Edwin returned home again, to the surprize of his domestics, before ten o'clock, having called at the undertaker's, and given very liberal directions respecting the interment of Mr. Herbert; which, though as private as possible, he desired should be very handsome.

Mrs. Edwin and Cecilia returned from the opera in the same company they went, much mortified, however, at the condolence of their friends on the shocking event in their family, which had told them, in pretty plain terms, the indecency of their appearing in public while the affair was so recent; indeed this was not the first thing that had happened in public very humiliating to those ladies; who had lately perceived, though their routs were still crowded, and the same quantity of tickets left at their door, that in private and select parties, and in places where women, whose presence carried propriety with it, resorted, they were often excluded. Their escorts at all places where they were seen, were certainly of that stamp, that few chose to dispute with them the honour of their acquaintance.

Out of humour with themselves, they more willingly listened to the entertainment offered by their beaux: but this they were soon deprived of; for the happy flow of spirits possessed by Mendez, and the soft languishings of the divine Count, both vanished at the sight of Mr. Edwin.

Mrs. Corbet, a widow of small fortune, but expensive establishment, had, at dinner, been particularly attentive to Edwin, and she resumed the same conduct at their return home; but as the gentlemen soon took leave, and as her orders for her chair were not taken any notice of, she could not decently out-stay them. In the time that remained, nothing but weariness, constraint, and ill-

ill-humour, were visible ; after, however, agreeing that it was necessary to put on mourning, which the ladies said was the most becoming thing in the world, and settling the *etiquette* of what order of people was proper to let in, Mr. Edwin forced himself to ask after their entertainment.

“ Oh ! it was odious ; nothing but frights at the opera, though an immense croud, the men lolling on each others shoulders, wholly attentive to themselves ; and the women nothing but impertinence and folly.” He took not the trouble to accede with, or contradict their opinions, but formally wishing them a good night, left his wife and sister to their own society.

The moment the polite husband entered his library his man appeared. The first glance of his countenance assured Mr. Edwin he was full of news ; and, indeed, so he was.

C H A P. LXIII.

Return to Anna.

THE situation in which we parted with our heroine was so interesting and deplorable, that I make no doubt my reader will condemn me for leaving her so long in such a state.

The fever was, as prognosticated, of the eruptive kind ; it was the small-pox. The agitation of her mind had forwarded the infection, which she had received in walking to Mrs. Wellers' the day before ; and at the period I have mentioned of Edwin's sending to the village, she had not recovered her senses.

Bates

Bates found every thing advanced by Wilkinfon confirmed by the people of the place. Mrs. Wilfon, who did not know him, affured him Anna was gone off with Squire Edwin, which he did not think neceffary to contradict ; and this being all the information he could by any means collect, he left Layton.

In returning through the city, he recollected his fiftcr, who having loft her hufband, a mafter of a man of war, was come to town to receive fome prize money due to him, and get her penfion : fhe had twice dined at the fecond table in Portman fquare, and, as he fupposed fhe would foon be leaving town, took the opportunity of calling at her lodgings.

He afcended the ftairs to her apartment without feeing any one ; but when he entered the front room, he was furprized to find his fiftcr and her landlady in tears, and a large quantity of phials on the mantle-piece ; which furprize was increafed with their hiftory of the matter that occafioned fuch an appearance ;—his fiftcr was the very identical Mrs. Hughes, who had fo humanely given up her bed to Anna.

Bates was ftruck with the account, which tallying in point of time with the abfence of Mifs Manfel, he begged to fee her.

Swelled as was her lovely face, and inflamed as were her eyes, he instantly knew her, as fhe lay reftlefs and talking inwardly, but of what he could not make out : the joy this difcovery gave him, may be conceived to be great, as he knew the generofity of his mafter, in affairs where his pleafures were concerned, to be unbounded : however, he took care to conceal his knowledge of the poor ft ranger, till he fhould receive his mafter's commands, and left them with a promife to call the next morning.

Mr. Edwin gratified him beyond his most sanguine expectation ; and charged him to return as he had appointed, and get his sister at any rate to their interest ; to order a physician, to let nothing be wanted ; to charge Mrs. Hughes, Anna if recovered her senses, never to drop a word of him or his family ; and, finally, to inquire if the loss of her beauty would be the consequence of her disorder.

Bates faithfully executed his commission, but finding his sister rather nicer in the matter than he expected, or thought necessary, he bound her to the most solemn promise not to betray the name of the friend who would wish to support Anna, to her.

A proper nurse was then procured and a physician sent for, most famous in the disorder ; and Bates had the good luck to carry his master two very acceptable pieces of news ; namely, that the doctor gave the greatest hopes of preserving both the life and beauty of his patient.—Again he was rewarded, and again dispatched with fresh orders to spare nothing money could purchase, and to observe, with respect to Mr. Edwin, profound secrecy.

Mrs. Hughes was a widow of twenty-eight ; the best tempered creature in the world : her father was a tenant to the late Mr. Turbville, and now to young Edwin, on an estate adjoining Sir William Edwin's—Bates, her brother, had been taken very young to wait on his present master, and had now lived with him twelve years ; had been the 'Tour, and indeed was the faithful repository of all his secrets. The confidence his master reposed in him, was well known not to be of the most laudable nature ; and this good woman would *have* been far more satisfied to have supported the unknown young person at her *own* expence than to have been so assisted, under such injunctions ; because
the

the whole country round Dennis Place not only loved, but feared the Edwin family too much to do any thing that could subject them to their resentment, not daring to disobey the orders of Mr. Edwin ; she was yet very much dissatisfied on being so restrained ;—every day and hour brought fresh instances of Mr. Edwin's solicitude for Anna's recovery : and the seventh day her senses returned ; but what a state did she find herself in !

As soon as her mental powers resumed their place, and recollection returned, what a dreadful gloom presented itself ! She had but a faint remembrance of accepting Mrs. Hughes's bed, but all the preceding events came unsought into her sickening imagination ; the violence of the fever abated with the turn of her disorder, but she was so weak as to be unable to speak, and so sore as to be unable to move ; the tears that gushed from her eyes, were the first proofs to the women about her, that she was sensible.

Their attention and tenderness were redoubled ; every thing that could sooth or revive her was done ; and, as she grew stronger, every painful retrospect avoided ; but it was not in the power of their kindness to banish the killing thoughts with which her situation filled her.

The more she was obliged to those humane strangers, the more the idea of the expence and trouble they had been at afflicted her ; she regretted, in the agonies of her soul, the preserving her existence, which seemed from her infancy to be devoted to misery ; and her extreme grief not only counteracted the effect of those medicines which were prescribed, but kept her in so a weak state, that the Doctor began to be apprehensive for her life.

Bates was constantly there three times a day ; and this piece of ill news he did not fail to

carry to Mr. Edwin ; who, distracted at the thoughts of now losing her, contrived, (as he supposed, with great reason, her low state was aggravated by the distress of her circumstances) a plan, from which he hoped the most favourable consequences.

He had got into his possession the two letters Mrs. Mansel had wrote to Anna, and by their help procured one to be wrote, as from that good man, expressing the most paternal solicitude for her recovery, assigning his own infirm state of health as the reason he came not himself—told her he had, by means of a friend, traced her with great difficulty, and inclosed a bill for thirty pounds recommending it to her to keep as concealed as possible.

This letter was delivered her by the late Mr. Herbert's footman, a man whom she well knew, and who being now wholly dependent on Mr. Edwin, he could not doubt the fidelity of.

Anna wept, and asked a thousand questions of the man, who promised to call again before he left town. The great trouble her malady had occasioned in the house where she was, rendered this bill very acceptable ; though it was accompanied with regret at being still in want of the support, she knew her paternal friend could ill spare.

However, with the first gleam of pleasure they had seen on her countenance, she insisted on paying them for their attendance, and what they had disbursed for her. This Mrs. Hughes was instructed to gratify her in ; and having made out a very trifling account, was handsomely paid. The Doctor, too, took his fees from her ; and now a little more at ease, she recovered her strength and spirits. The disorder, though very thick on her body, had been remarkably favourable to her face. She had yet money enough to support her for a little time, and to purchase a few necessaries she wanted.

C H A P. LXIV.

Meeting of Old Friends.

THE first day Anna was able to sit up to dinner, Mrs. Hughes, with the woman of the house and her daughter, partook, at her request, of the little repast; which, when ended, she took the occasion to thank them severally for their great kindness; adding, that as the appearance of such a young creature, thrown upon their charity in so remarkable a manner, who neither then nor now seemed to be the care or concern of any body, and who really was more destitute of relations than, God be praised, she was of friends, since she knew she had one of the latter description, though she was not blest with any of the former, must have excited their curiosity; a curiosity so natural, that if it was untinged with doubts to her disadvantage, their confidence must be the result of their own goodness of heart; she would, therefore, tell them the sad claims she had on their humane feelings.

“ Alas ! (continued she, weeping) the accident
“ that brought me here is not the first by which I
“ have been left a miserable orphan on the pity of
“ strangers ; I am not acquainted with my own
“ name, the one I go by is that of the friend to
“ whose paternal love I owe the power of repaying
“ the pecuniary obligations I was under to you ;
“ you have before you, my good friends, the child
“ of sorrow, the daughter of charity ; what, or
“ who my parents were, or whether I am by blood
“ connected with a living being, I know not ; the
“ person

“ person supposed to be my father, died at a strange
“ lodging, where he had not so much as slept ;
“ and I was taken from thence by a clergyman.”
“ Who, merciful God !” exclaimed the landlady
of the house, trembling with eagerness, “ was that
“ clergyman’s name Dalton ?—Anna astonished,
answered it was.

“ And yours, my dear child,” said the woman,
“ is Anna ; oh ! my sweet creature (embracing
“ her) have hope, have confidence in the wisdom as
“ well as the mercy of that being, who, in a more
“ dreadful state than that of deserted infancy, con-
“ ducted you a second time to the same humble
“ instrument of his goodness for preservation ; yes,
“ my child, it was at my house your father ex-
“ pired, and necessity only could have prevailed on
“ me ever to resign you, though I could not
“ doubt Mrs. Dalton’s care of you ; but now we
“ part no more.”

Anna having been told the person at whose
house she was left was dead, could hardly credit the
woman’s assertions ; the particulars, indeed, had
never been willingly entered on by Dalton, and
when by dint of persevering intreaties, he could be
dragged into the subject ; he told her no person
was now living but himself, that was in any way
witness to the sudden dissolution of her parents,
who were foreigners. When she repeated those
circumstances to Mrs. Clark (it was indeed her) and
the vicissitudes of her life, she again and again em-
braced her, calling her by every endearing epithet,
and bid her look forward with certain hope, to the
events of a life so miraculously preserved.—“ My
“ dear child,” said she, “ what end that man,
“ who I always believed a good Christian, could
“ have in deceiving you, I can’t think ; it is now
“ many years since I lost all traces of him or you,
“ and my own circumstances getting from bad to
“ worse,

“ worse, he might not be more successful in his
“ inquiries after me ; but he has in possession things
“ you should certainly be acquainted with, which
“ might lead to a discovery of your family ; your
“ father, I am sure, was a gentleman.”

She then told her every circumstance that happened both to him and the woman who accompanied him ; to which was added, the account of what effects were left ; the value of the watch and rings was not the object that most struck them, it was the entire concealment of them and the box of papers.

While the sad retrospect of the event which had deprived our heroine of every natural friend, and exposed her to the manifold evils of poverty and the cutting necessity of being dependent on strangers for subsistence, filled her with grief and agony : she could not help joining in admiration at that Providence which guided her steps to the habitation of the only person in the world, besides the Daltons, who could give her, from their own knowledge, information of what was of so much consequence for her to know.

Mrs. Clark protested she never more should leave her, except for her own advantage, or till somebody owned her—and perceiving the sorrow this hint excited, charged her to keep up her spirits, since she was sure, her life had not been so evidently the peculiar care of heaven for nothing—“ Here only
“ think,” said she, “ what a blessing it is you
“ should have such an education to set off your
“ sweet face, and now that face so charmingly pre-
“ served ; and then, again, you see in how many
“ instances you have met with such good friends ;
“ you must take the bitter with the sweet, and all,
“ I am sure, will be for the best.”

The effusions of a joyful heart were visible in all Mrs. Clark's words ; but, notwithstanding her confidence

confidence in the principles of the reverend teacher, she had at times very strong suspicions that the trunk contained something he wished not to be known, and his so industriously concealing it from Anna, that, and every other circumstance that could lead to any knowledge of her family, now as strongly confirmed those suspicions—*She* was in *reality*, what he *appeared*; sober and religious; her outward professions were perfectly consistent with the principles on which her actions were founded—She was still a member of a Methodist society, and for those tenets she had the strongest partiality. To suppose a minister, who was held in high estimation among the preachers of her sect, guilty of wronging an orphan, under the sanction of charity, was scandalizing the whole body, and was what she wished to avoid, more especially as it might not be so—he might have motives for his conduct perfectly consistent with the sacred character, though not requisite to be made public; but those she was resolved to inquire into—Without, therefore, hinting at her design, she contented herself for the present with shewing every kindness to Anna, who was again brought under her roof in so destitute a situation—She could, she said, not doubt, but Providence meant her to be the humble means, either of restoring her to her family, or preserving her from some dreadful evil which might else have awaited her, and therefore, poor as she was, she was sure something would turn up to enable her to keep her.

The words of the good enthusiast struck Mrs. Hughes very forcibly—her own ideas of the plot laid by Mr. Edwin convinced her that they were indeed too pregnant with truth, and half converted her to the faith by which they were inspired, being fully satisfied in her own mind, his particular attention to such a young person could have but one end—

end—her conscience reproached her for concealing suspicions so well founded, but the prejudices of her whole life were too strong for her good wishes ; she therefore resolved to hasten the conclusion of her business, which had been already delayed beyond her expectation, and leave town as soon as she could.

Anna, once more with a real friend, and treated with maternal indulgence, recovered daily ; and Mrs. Clark bringing to her mind constantly her lost friend Mrs. Mansel, the Llandore family likewise obtruded themselves on her ideas—The suit of clothes she had embroidered for Lady Edwin, so much admired, gave her the hint of a mode by which she might perhaps procure the means of subsistence, were more flattering to her pride than going to service—She had no sooner mentioned it to Mrs. Clark, than she sallied out in quest of work.

But whether it was her appearance, which was that of a primitive Christian, in a plain black satin bonnet and cloak, a light brown fine camblet gown, small sharp features, or whether she happened to apply to shops who were, as they said, overstocked with hands, she returned tired and unsuccessful.

Poor Anna was much disappointed, but recollecting the person who got the trimming made for Lady Edwin, employed a great number of people, as she had been once at his house with that lady, she resolved as soon as her health would permit her to go out, to try her own luck.

In the mean while, Mr. Edwin having settled all Mrs. Herbert's affairs, and paid the expence of Tyrrel's accident, began to grow impatient to see our heroine—Mrs. Hughes, however, insisted he should not come to her lodgings, without leave from Anna---her inconvenient scruples greatly embarrassed him ; he had no hopes of obtaining such a permission while she was there, he therefore

insisted on her immediate removal, which she was obliged to comply with and returned to Wales without completing her business.

C H A P. LXV.

The Married Lover.

EDWIN then flattered himself little trouble and less resistance would attend the completion of his desires, and began his operations with great spirit ; he inquired for her as a stranger, and was immediately shewn to the apartment Mrs. Hughes had left. Anna's surprize and displeasure at this visit were equal ; it affronted her virtue, it alarmed her pride---Reduced by her illness, weak, and languid, she was an interesting and affecting object---Edwin's heart was by no means callous to the feelings of humanity ; he apologized for his intrusion ; and with tenderness and delicacy (when she had recovered her first alarm) made the most flaming profession of a violent attachment---offered her a *carte blanche*, and, throwing himself at her feet, vowed it was impossible for him to exist without her.

The innate love of virtue, and the natural abhorrence of vice implanted in her early years in the mind of this amiable girl, would have filled her with horror at such a proposal from any one ; but in this instance, it was aggravated by her knowledge of his recent marriage, his family connections, and by her sense of justice and propriety ; yet her indignation being really against the vice, while the son of Lady Edwin, the relation of the Herberts,

was

was on those accounts the object of her compassion, she coolly and dispassionately rejected, in the most unequivocal terms, all his offers; remonstrated with him on the barbarity of his conduct to his wife, and the scandal such a mode of living, if adopted, must entail on his family---Eloquent in the cause of honour, she entreated him to have some concern for the peace of his worthy mother, and some regard for the credit of his own posterity, which he knew to be of such consequence to Sir William and Lady Edwin.

He, in return, denied the charge of barbarity to his wife, as she had quite as little feeling for him as he could possibly have for her; his mother, his family, and his posterity would have reason to bless her, if, by accepting his offer, she would condescend to be his sweet guide through life. He had no joy at home, no pleasure abroad; his fortune was already impaired by the want of happiness in his domestic circle, since he had run from one evil to another, in vain search of the content he found it absurd to seek at home. Had his parents really consulted his happiness, would they have joined him by their engagements, so early in life, to a woman he could not help despising; in the union formed for him, they had considered neither his taste nor his inclinations; he would go abroad with her; she should there bear his name, and share his fortune; he would give the world he had more to offer her.

He was here interrupted by our heroine, who said she was grieved to find he could be at such ease with himself, on so wicked a proposal, as to attempt such a justification. She could, therefore, only beg him to have so much compassion for her situation as to refrain teasing, and so much respect for unoffending innocence as to forbear insulting her farther; it would answer no purpose; he would

would find her principles were not to be corrupted; and as to her inclinations she had told him long ago, and she now solemnly repeated it, was it in his power to offer her marriage, with the full consent of his family, poor, destitute and almost friendless as she was, they were too fervently engaged to admit one doubt of her rejection, not only of him but the whole world.

Mr. Edwin wanted not understanding nor knowledge of the female heart; he could not therefore doubt but the lips of Anna spoke the language of hers. Mortifying as was this conviction, it did not prevail on him to forego a suit in which all his desires were so interested; the greater the difficulty, the more valuable the conquest. The place of her residence was wholly unknown to any but himself; she was poor, and but for him must have wanted common necessities; she would yet want them, if he withheld his bounty. He found in her flight from Dalton's, her repugnance to Sutton, and though he knew not all the circumstances, he naturally supposed the more the report of her being with him was believed, the less likely she would be to find any other protector; while, therefore, he could contrive to keep her concealed, whilst she continued distressed, he had hopes, and while there was hopes, he would persist. Affecting to be moved by her arguments, he then endeavoured to prevail on her to suffer him to visit her as a friend, and to supply her with any money she might have occasion for. Anna absolutely refused both, and he was obliged to leave her with no hopes of success to his wishes, but those founded on her distress. From her he went immediately to Dalton's, and told them haughtily, he was come to see Miss Mansel's clothes sent her. The poor parson was struck into confusion at this requisition. Was it possible? Could Anna be with Mr. Edwin at last?

Farewell,

Farewell, then, to all his hopes from his noble patron. In the same style of proud superiority, he was told to deliver every thing belonging to Anna. Irresolute how to act for the best, that is to say, most for his own interest, he answered, a gentleman in the neighbourhood had put his seal upon her trunks, at her own desire ; that gentleman was sent for, and acquainted with the demand.

Doctor Collet surprized, and indeed sorry to see this undoubted proof of her being with Mr. Edwin, answered, if Miss Mansel had sent for her things, he presumed the gentleman would produce her written order. No ; it was not of consequence ; he was known, and would be answerable for his actions ; he was ready to pay him and insisted on having the trunks, and bid them detain them at their peril.

Dalton recollecting all was now over, with their hopes of the friendship of the peer, and concluding this would be the last advantage he could expect from his late ward, contrary to the advice of Mr. Collet, he greedily seized this last occasion of pocketing a sum of money on her account, and received from Mr. Edwin a draft for one hundred and fifty pounds for her lodging, board, education, and cloathing ; he then delivered her effects to the young libertine, who, hugging himself on his success, sent them in an hired cart, in his name, to an hotel of no great eminence for its modest company, and presently left Layton. Doctor Collet, with a rueful countenance and disappointed mind, went first to Mrs. Wellers, to whom he related the visit of Mr. Edwin, lamenting with her the depravity of the times, and concluding they had been too sanguine in the acquittal of Anna, who, however blameless hitherto, had at last entirely forfeited all claim to esteem ; and then returned home to write to Mr. Herbert.

Mr. Edwin,

Mr. Edwin, highly satisfied with his prize, resolved to make a merit of restoring it to Anna, at the same time he knew it would ruin her in the opinion of every friend; but that was a trifle beneath his thought. Elated with his success, he went to Brookes's, and from thence was engaged in a scene of dissipation, to give it the tenderest of names, that put our heroine out of his head for a few days.

C H A P. LXVI.

The Embroideress.

THE health and strength of our heroine being now considerably restored, dressed in a clean plain morning gown, she took a coach to Pall Mall, and alighting a few paces from the door, walked to the embroiderer's.

Mr. Desmoulins was a Frenchman and a fop, but very ingenious, and in high vogue in his way among the first people. His wife, to whose former husband he was foreman, was an Irish virago, old enough to be his mother, extremely jealous of her husband's love and her own authority, which last she could not bear should be invaded by any one whom she had raised to the honour of her bed and the profits of her trade, from a state of indigent servitude. Monsieur, on his part, conceiving the felicity of his hand at the altar, and the possession of his most charming person, so far from fairly purchased by the change in his fortune, had been thrown away on an ungrateful woman, not sensible of her extreme good bargain, felt not the least disposition

disposition to give way to the imperious temper of his lady, or to dissipate her jealousy by not conversing with those she disliked, namely, all who were younger or more agreeable than herself, or by exhibiting any particular proof of fondness for her; in short, the whole pleasure of this happy pair was to thwart and contradict each other. Whatever Mrs. Desmoulins approved, was sure, with the utmost politeness and civility, to be disapproved by her husband; and whatever was proposed by him, was sure to be opposed by his wife, though to little purpose; for though Monsieur protested it was with great regret and extreme mortification he varied from her opinion, he never gave up his point.

On enquiring for Mr. Desmoulins, Anna was shewn into a back shop, where, assorting of patterns, sat this amiable couple. The lady, who seldom rose from her seat to people that came on foot, glanced scornfully at our heroine; nor would she, had Anna's figure been less captivating, have probably farther noticed her. Mr. Desmoulins, without looking up, demanded how he could have the honour of obeying her commands? Anna blushed, hesitated, blushed again—The lady fired at the sight—this was some mistress of her husband's, who could be so confused on no other account than her happening to be present. “Why
“ don't you speak, young woman?” said she in a tone that almost petrified her; while it called the man's attention from what he was about, who, more in opposition to his wife than in compassion to her confusion, begged she would compose herself, and let him know to what happy accident he owed the honour of seeing her, and intreated she would inform him how he could have the pleasure of obeying her commands? The extreme politeness of the husband was not less embarrassing to Anna,
than

than the unprovoked rudeness of the wife. After many efforts to usher in her request, in a manner least likely to give offence, she at length stammered out a petition to be employed—which was instantly negatived by the wife, and granted by the husband. He did not, however, forget to inquire what security she meant to give him for the work he should entrust her with. A question so new and unexpected, struck her into a confusion, of which Mrs. Desmoulins did not fail to make her advantage, by remarking, that none but a fool would think of employing her:—an insinuation the least likely of all others to lessen his confidence. He, therefore, regardless of his wife's sarcastical expressions, and deaf to her keen remonstrances, gave our heroine an elegant waistcoat, contenting himself with her address instead of a bondsman. She returned home, too much elated to attend to the ill-breeding of Mrs. Desmoulins, and told Mrs. Clarke in raptures of her success. A second-hand frame was immediately purchased, and the work began with such eagerness, she would hardly spare any time for eating and rest. Mr. Edwin called in vain at her door; his letters were returned unread, and every offered favour declined with resolution and consistency. No princess could be happier than Anna Mansel while so laudably employed. The waistcoat was soon finished and carried home.

However discordant were the general disposition of Mr. and Mrs. Desmoulins, there was one thing, and only one, in which they perfectly agreed; that was their own interest. The scolding brow of the one, and the careless indifference of the other, was quickly changed at first sight of the waistcoat; they were both good judges of their business, and the particular neatness and beauty of her work, changed the harsh, unwomanly features of the mistress, into

into a placid smile. She was liberally paid, and given fresh employ of a superior sort, with promise of constant work. Her heart bounded with joy; the moment of her return, she settled a price for her board and lodging, as beneficial to Mrs. Clarke as convenient to herself.

No art was left untried by Mr. Edwin; but his attempts to bias her pure mind to evil recoiled on himself; and his plan of succeeding through her distress, rendered fruitless by her industry. He was therefore forced to give up, for the present, views that had cost him so dear, and lay by in hope of yet being so fortunate as to be in some degree necessary to the proud beauty, whose charms he could neither forget, nor wholly give up.

Wilkinson was indefatigable in Mrs. Herbert's affairs. Sir William Edwin advanced money to clear both the estate and iron works; he sent his sister the most fraternal consolations, and with fresh professions of regard, gave her son leave to please himself in his stay abroad. Those matters settled, Mr. Wilkinson returned to London, accompanied by Mr. Mansel, whose anxiety was insupportable at the account he gave him of Anna. The last words of his beloved wife dwelt on his ears from the moment he heard the injuries she had suffered; she occupied all his waking thoughts, and his dreams represented her in the most helpless and forlorn situation. He well knew the cause both of her leaving the lodge and changing her name. His wife, whose memory was not less dear than sacred, had formed her mind, and been the guide of her early years, could she be then less than perfect?—Tormented with his regret for having suffered her to leave him, and by his terror for what might be her then distress, he resolved on a journey

journey to London, although, from his gouty habit, very unfit to undertake it.

The sight of her old friends afforded great comfort to Mrs. Herbert; and Patty rejoiced in the hope of being restored to the society she loved—their doors were shut, though that precaution was almost needless; for as they were known to be left in very dependent circumstances, they were not likely to be thronged with visitants in a place where the heart of Mrs. Herbert being still less known than her person, she could have no chance to excite the attention of the worthy few, who were, from congenial virtues, qualified to associate with her. Mrs. Edwin nor Cecilia had condescended to pay her one condoling visit; and Mr. Edwin having liberally supplied her with money, and done every thing he could do with respect to her affairs, soon became weary of urging his wife and sister to pay her some attention, or shew any countenance to their young relation, as well as murdering any part of his own time, by bestowing it on an old aunt and insipid cousin.

Mr. Mansel's trouble was cordially shared by Miss Herbert, who not being now under any restraint, was as warm in the praise of her friend as he could be himself, and so earnest to recover her, that she prevailed on her mother to postpone their journey to Llandore a few days, in hopes to have her with them—not a little did she rejoice in the possibility of renewing those scenes of tranquil happiness they had passed together.

Next morning carried Mr. Wilkinson and his reverend friend to Dalton's, on the earnest inquiry they were determined to make after the lost Anna—The looks of Mr. Mansel pictured his mind; they were mild, serene, and benevolent; his countenance had acquired a solemn melancholy cast

cast since the death of his wife, which was at this period much increased by the uncertain state of the charge she had left. True religion, and unaffected piety, with a soul rendered indulgent to the foibles of others by patience and meek forbearance, marked his character—he knew the sacred profession of Dalton, and could not encourage a thought of his acting wilfully wrong, and therefore expected to find him in affliction at the same cause with himself—He was deceived—Dalton had been to Lord Sutton to communicate to him Mr. Edwin's visit, and was, in consequence of his delivering the clothes, turned out in disgrace and contempt: he was therefore secretly exulting on having secured the cash, and bestowed no farther thought on her he had so villainously robbed—Mrs. Dalton setting her down as a lost treasure, both as to this world and the next, agreed it could be no sin to make such a libertine pay for his bad actions.

A fresh inquiry after Miss Mansel then was not likely to give them much pleasure, but the manners and character of a good clergyman carries with them an indelible weight among the most abandoned; and guilt did that in Mr. Dalton which a real veneration did in his wife—it rendered them obliging and communicative; but after going through the story of her elopement, sinking only the cause, when they came to Mr. Edwin's demand of her clothes and payment of her debt, neither of the gentlemen could for a while credit them, till it was confirmed by Dr. Collet; and even then, Wilkinson swore there must be some mystery in it—in which opinion Mr. Mansel joined; and they returned to London with increased anxiety, but not with less confidence in the honour of our heroine.

They went directly to Portman Square——Mr. Edwin was not at home——When would it
be

be most likely to meet with him?—It was very uncertain—They called again, and again—They writ with as little success—They were always too soon or too late. Advertisements were put in the papers, describing Anna, and requesting her to return to her friend, to no purpose. Mrs. Clarke kept no servant; her daughter and herself did the work of their little house between them—they never read a paper; and the residence of Anna was entirely unknown to every body, but those whose desire it was to conceal it. At length, wearied with their unavailing inquiries, in despair of finding her, and Mrs. Herbert's presence being as necessary at Llandore as Mr. Mansel's at his rectory, and Wilkinson's at the iron works, they were obliged to give it up; but Wilkinson protested he would not quit London till he had seen that vile Lord, who was the original cause of all Anna's misfortunes; and in a fit of grief and disappointment, he inquired out that nobleman, and at the expence of five shillings to his porter, got admittance to the deserted lover, whose unfortunate passion had every prognostic of costing him very dear.

C H A P. LXVII.

The Intrusion.

LORD Sutton was at this time very much indisposed, but too fond of the world, and too little at ease with himself, to bear the confinement of a sick room. Villars, with a careful, serene countenance,

nance, was standing the brunt of his ill nature and brutality; she had been making some tea, which he said was too strong, and protested he was the worst used man on the face of God's earth; that, however, it was his own fault, for trusting any thing to such an absolute idiot.

A man in shabby regimentals, who had the honour of being led Captain to this august personage, was appealed to, and agreed that it certainly was a pity Mrs. Villars was not more attentive; to be sure the tea was too strong, though some people (winking at her) liked it so: Now his wife made the best tea in the world, would Mrs. Villars but learn of her. In this kind offer, and what was farther meant to follow, he was interrupted by a sudden and involuntary start of his Lordship. In a voice of terror he perfectly screamed out, "And who are you?" to Wilkinson, who was announced by the servant, as a gentleman that had particular business with him. Lord Sutton's unusual salutation, trembling form, and agitated countenance, frightened the whole group.

Wilkinson's natural courage equalled that of most young men; but he nevertheless felt himself shocked, in an unaccountable manner, at what he thought was the apprehensions of guilt, forgetting that as yet his Lordship was unacquainted with his errand. The shaking of his limbs, the ghastly stare, the quivering of his lips, turned white as ashes, still continuing, as he incessantly demanded who the intruder was, whence he came from, and what he wanted, still more disconcerted him. Villars and the Captain concluding some dreadful frenzy had seized him, they begged Wilkinson to withdraw; which he would not consent to, but on condition of re-admission if he presently recovered. As he was retiring, he was stopped by Lord Sutton,

Sutton, who, somewhat more composed, bid him stay; but was again struck with terror at his beginning to speak, interrupting him as he was going to open his business.

“Phantom of horror,” said the trembling culprit, “do these pangs, which now shake my frame, announce thy errand? Thou living image of a murdered angel, art thou come to visit in vengeance the destroyer of thy mother? Is then the day of retribution already come? Why did you let him in?” continued he, turning fiercely to the Captain and Villars. “Who, my good Lord?” answered he; “this gentleman says he is a personal stranger to your Lordship; he waits upon you on business.”

“Let him be brief then, and never let me see him more.” The Captain would then have retired, but was bid not to stir; and even the presence of Villars was considered as a protection. Wilkinson was then called upon for his business, which he was now loath to enter on, as the disturbed mind of the Peer rendered his reproaches an act of unnecessary punishment and mortification to a poor wretch, whose sense of guilt was so very acute; but on his being still urged to speak, the particular softness and tone of his voice again struck Lord Sutton into a panic; scalding strangers rolled down his haggard cheeks. As well as the extraordinary scene would let him, Wilkinson entered on his business, and producing his Lordship’s card to Lady Edwin, demanded on what grounds he had so confirmed the testimony of Mrs. Frajan? A reprieve to a criminal at execution could not have a more instantaneous effect than this question; he threw himself back in his chair, as if taking breath. “Is this then *all*?” cried he.—“*All*, my Lord!” answered Wilkinson. “Is the ruin of the character of an innocent young person, and
“depriving

“ depriving her of the few friends her modest merit had attracted, then such a trifle; or do you
“ imagine your subsequent offer of marriage could
“ compensate for such an outrage to her innocence, such a disgrace to your own honour. I
“ must, my Lord, insist on knowing what were
“ your reasons for the suspicions this unmanly card confirms. I am the disinterested friend of Miss
“ Mansel; and depend on it, I will follow you to
“ the verge of the earth, till her guilt is proved,
“ or till her calumniators shall manifest her innocence.”

“ You belong to the Edwins, I presume?”—
“ I do not, my Lord; I have not the happiness of
“ belonging to any body: urged by inclination,
“ and bound only by honour, I avow myself the
“ protector of Miss Mansel’s character; her person, wherever it is, as far as depends on herself,
“ is, I know, incorruptible.”

“ If, young man, you credit my offer of marriage to her, you may be sure I shall be glad
“ to find it so: I adore her; and am not
“ more solicitous to obtain her, from passion,
“ than from the wish to make an honourable
“ amends for the injury I was innocently led to
“ do her.”

“ Innocently!” repeated Wilkinson, indignantly:—“ Yes, Sir, innocently,” answered his Lordship.—“ Mrs. Melmoth perhaps might be,
“ and I believe was, imposed on by the wicked French woman, who I am clear was herself the thief; and if you are really the
“ friend of Miss Mansel, you will evince it more
“ by uniting your endeavours with mine, to
“ discover the place of her retreat, and, if
“ she be yet virtuous, persuading her to become Lady Sutton, than in vainly railing at
“ me.”——

Wilkinson

Wilkinson coloured:—"I persuade her to be come Lady Sutton! I would die first:—*No*, dearest Anna, if I must lose thee; if the faithful heart, where thy image is ever present, must resign thee, may it be to one, blooming and lovely as thyself, whose honour and whose worth shall insure thy happiness;—*not*," looking scornfully at him, "to a man, whose vices render him contemptible, and whose hoary head is, by his own voluntary actions, covered with shame instead of honour."——

"This," replied Lord Sutton, "is a language I would not bear, was it not in my own house?" "Your age and infirmities," returned the young man, "will be your protection in any other place as well as this; but depend on it, no place shall protect you from the shame and contempt you deserve, or screen you from the voice of truth, when and wherever I meet you."——So saying, he flung out of the room, throwing his card on the table.

The eyes of Lord Sutton followed him.—When quite out of sight, with a deep sigh, he examined the card; and, after some time, broke silence, with asking the Captain what he thought of him?

It was proper *now*, that there was no danger, for the valiant toad-eater, to be in a rage at the insults offered his patron; he begged the address, that he might have the honour of chastising him.—"*You*!"—answered Lord Sutton, with a significant emphasis that staggered the poor captain; not so much on account of the insinuation it certainly implied, of his want of prowess, as for the uncertainty it left him in, of the sentiments it behoved him to express of a matter that had occasioned such uncommon agitations in his principal.—

A silence

A silence ensued for some moments, when his Lordship thought proper to leave the room, and retire to his library. Mrs. Villars, relieved from her morning's attendance, was following him, but the Captain stopped her, to beg she would favour him with her opinion of the late transaction; in return for which, he promised his wife should teach her to make tea; which, as she, he presumed, was a woman of character, and Villars was not, he chose to insinuate, would be a great condescension; but that foolish woman excused herself, with her usual indifference to the objects around her; not having formed any opinion, she could give none; and hinted her fears, in rather a severer manner than she was accustomed to, "that not having had his lady's practice, she should be little better for her instructions," she then left the poor body spitefully.—Hurt at her words and manner, respecting his spouse, and in a doleful dilemma how to conduct himself in the case of Wilkinson, whose address Lord Sutton had taken with him, he returned home without an invitation to dinner; where, notwithstanding his profound respect for her, he thought proper to quarrel with, and beat this very best of all possible wives, because she had not the art of procuring provision without money.

Mr. Wilkinson attended Mrs. Herbert to Llandore, accompanied by Mr. Mansel: they all left London full of regret and anxiety, for the fate of a young creature, who was the object of their mutual regard and esteem.

C H A P. LXVIII.

A Robbery.

WE left Anna happier than she had been since the loss of Mrs. Mansel; her employers were charmed with her execution; and as it was always fetched and carried by Hannah Clarke, who was a very ordinary little woman of thirty; she extorted more civility from Mrs. Desmoulins, than it was possible so fine a figure as Anna's could have been entitled to.

The winter was now approaching, and as Mr. Edwin, neither by himself or servants, had given her any interruption while Mr. Mansel was in town, for fear (which was really the case) they might place a spy on his actions, she began to conceive herself safe from any farther insult; she had not again seen, to her surprize, the person who brought her the letter from Mr. Mansel; but concluding he had forgot to call, wrote to that friend her thanks for his seasonable supply; and giving a brief account of all that had happened to her. She made two holidays to do this in, and was just sitting down to her frame, when Mrs. Desmoulins entered her apartment, followed by her maid with a large bundle; her business was, in the first place, to satisfy herself of the place of our heroine's residence, and, in the next, to give her the train of a suit of clothes to finish—The coat was already done; it was intended for a present from a young lady of quality, to her sister, a new married Duchess. She very much wished to have it made
up

up by the next birth day; but was taken with a fit of weariness, and would do no more to it herself; though its being finished by another hand was to be kept a profound secret—It was elegantly fancied, and variegated in the most beautiful taste, with embroidery, foil, spangles, and crape; and an ample price was to be paid if done well. Anna readily undertook, and instantly set about a job, from which she expected as much credit as profit. She had proceeded rapidly in her task, which had more taste than labour in it; when having sent for a fresh supply of one shade of silk, she accidentally cast her eyes on the paper in which it was wrapped—it was part of a magazine, and contained the deaths of the month. The first in the list was the name of Charles Herbert, Esq; of Llandore Castle. It occurred not to her, that the father and son were both of one Christian name—She was sensible only of the idea that young Herbert was dead—A thousand circumstances now confirmed those dreadful surmises—His ill health, which obliged him to go out of town at the period of her leaving Grosvenor Square—Mr. Edwin's mourning—The total extinction of her hopes, by his entire giving her up, which, from not hearing from him, though her abode was so well known to his family, she concluded to be the case, now all rose to her imagination, and conspired to distract her—again the fatal paper was examined—it was indeed Charles Herbert—a dreadful mist overspread her eyes—she sunk senseless on the floor.

Alarmed at the noise of her fall, Mrs. Clarke flew to her apartment. The sight of her dear child, as she fondly called her, bereft of sense and motion, had nearly thrown her into the same condition; the house, the neighbours were alarmed—the apothecary summoned.—He let her blood, and

she soon returned to a sense of sorrow exceeding all she had yet felt.

In the midst of her misfortunes, when every other hope forsook her, she had indulged a latent pleasure in that of being dear to Herbert; in that hope, unknown to herself, existed one of being, by some happy means or other, once more blest in his society. The last interview had left its traces on her mind never to be erased. When she was particularly sensible of her misfortunes, *that* was her never-failing resource; when she suffered her naturally sanguine temper to look forward to a possibility of better days, still *he* was her first object; but those flattering ideas no longer soothed her imagination; the relentless hand of fate had torn from her heart the last, and only fond hope; the creation was now a void; the world had nothing in it for her; the most amiable, the most beloved youth was no more—she might now, without fear of injury to Miss Edwin, without dread of disturbing the peace of his family, indulge in a luxury of grief the retrospect of his virtues; she could live over again each scene that had bound her soul to his—She yet saw and felt the benignant glance of his eyes—their soft languishments still melted on her thoughts. But, alas! he was lost for ever, and for ever. In this distracted situation tears and sighs were her only relief. Unable to bear the light, it was in vain Mrs. Clarke implored her to repose her sorrows in her faithful bosom—she mourned the dear youth inwardly and incessantly—her rest and appetite both forsook her, and had not another calamity awaited her, which, by rousing her faculties, made her grief change its object, in all probability she would have sunk under the secret agonies of her mind.

Bates, who knew the wishes of his master, called often on Mrs. Clarke's daughter, and pretending
love

love to that foolish woman, had egress and regress there unknown to her mother. A few days after this afflicting circumstance to Anna, Mrs. Clarke was sent for to visit a sick brother at Chatham: it was with great reluctance she left her in such a state of mind and body; but as she expected some trifles at his death, our heroine insisted on her going.

The first day of her absence, worn out by grief and want of rest, Anna threw herself on the bed, and unfortunately for a few minutes forgot her cares. In this interval Bates called—Hannah was in the kitchen under the shop: not meeting with any one below, a sudden impulse of curiosity carried him up stairs. The door of her apartment being open, the beauty of the work induced him, treading very light and seeing the room empty, to take a nearer view of it.

In that evil moment, her ill fate put it in his head, as he had often heard his master curse the embroidery, as the means of her being enabled to support herself independent of him, if she was deprived of that resource, Mr. Edwin must yet succeed, he silently stripped the train out of the frame, and the coat hanging on the chairs for her guide, bundled the whole up, and got off unheard and undiscovered.

Anna's sorrow was too poignant to suffer her long to rest—The little bed room adjoined to that in which her work stood. But who can express her feelings, at the sight of her frame stripped, and the coat gone?—She ran down stairs almost frantic. Hannah was by that time in the shop—Search was made, the neighbourhood alarmed—A little girl who came for a skain of thread said she met a man coming out of the shop with a bundle. Anna half distracted, knew not yet the consequence of this misfortune. She got Hannah to go
to

to Mr. Desmoulins'—He and his wife were outrageous, they were ruined, they should lose their best customers and friends, no money could compensate for the loss, but if it could, they had taken no securities. Mrs. Desmoulins blamed her husband; he cursed for the first time his own folly; and both vowed revenge on our ill-fated heroine.

On undertaking the work, she had mentioned her having done Lady Edwin's suit which was so much admired—Away flew Mrs. Desmoulins to Sir William Edwin's to make enquiries. The servant there told her, the person who worked that suit for their Lady, was said not to be honest; and was, moreover, now in keeping. Inflamed by this news, she returned to her husband: she thought what his ridiculous obstinacy would come to: he would employ the slut, but she knew his motives, and the world should know them too. She would go to Lady Harriot; she would throw herself at the feet of the Duchesses; she would disclose those injuries she had hitherto borne in meekness and silence. Oh! if her dear Timothy were but alive to see this day; to see the business he, poor dear creature, took such pains to establish, thrown away on strumpets! But it did not signify, see what the Duchesses would say. The poor Frenchman, unable to stop the torrent of her reproaches, and conscious of her having opposed his employing our heroine, was filled with confusion and dismay. The disobliging of the young Duchesses, whose beauty was not more the object of general admiration, than her sweetness was that of respect and esteem, and whose favour was as much the source of profit to the tradesmen she patronized as her displeasure was the reverse; besides for ever offending Lady Harriot, who chose to have the whole credit of the work. The superior penetration of his wife, now so evident in this unlucky event,

event, admitted not of dispute ; he therefore had neither power nor inclination to oppose her measures :—she insisted on taking out a warrant against the hussy, to which he readily consented ; it was, however, too late in the evening to take a step of that nature, and the innocent Anna was suffered to pass that night unknowing of the dreadful fate which awaited her.

C H A P. LXIX.

The Trio of Magistrates.

THE loss of the embroidery afflicted our heroine most sensibly, as she doubted not but the means of her subsistence would be taken from her ; but that was an object of far less concern to her now than it would have been a few days ago. Herbert was gone ! How gladly would she now resign a life, which had been a constant scene of sorrow and disappointment, to be united to him for ever ! In reflections on the uncommon cruelty of her fate, in despair of one day's peace, joyless in the present, and hopeless in the future, her heart sickened, and the extreme dejection of her spirits, which could not evaporate in tears, brought on a slow fever, which preyed on her all night, but intermitted towards morning, when she fell into a doze, from which she was awoke by the cries of Hannah at her chamber door—Almost fainting with weakness and grief, she made an effort to dress

dress herself, and opened the door, when to her unspeakable terror, two men entered, who told her they had got a warrant against her; ignorant of their meaning, as well as intent, she begged to know what they meant; when in burst the inexorable Mrs. Desmoulins; bidding her instantly go with them; the meaning was, to punish such demure sluts as her; and, since she could not produce her work, she should be employed in Bridewell, where thieving could answer no end.

Anna's outcries brought the neighbours in, when the volubility of the tradeswoman, opposed to the death-like silence of poor Anna, immediately settled the matter:—"no wonder the gentle woman was in such a passion; it was a sad thing for people to lose their bread by such creatures; it was plain enough she was guilty; that might be seen in her looks." One of the constables, however, in compassion to her youth and sex, begged Mrs. Desmoulins would withdraw, and let him try to bring her to a confession: at this Anna started: "I know not what you mean or why I am thus surrounded; if it is on account of the work I lost, be pacified, madam, I have one friend, who can and will satisfy you. I am," continued she, "very ill able to support myself under such treatment; but be assured you will be paid your demand: I beg I may be left alone."

"Yes, yes, mistress, you will have time enough to be alone," retorted the woman. "You must now be satisfied at going into company." "Come, Sir, do your office." The men seized her.—Slipping from their hands on her knees, her face bathed in tears, and every token of despair in her countenance, she begged to know what was to be done with her, and where she was to go, but no answer was vouchsafed to her heart-breaking intreaties;

intreaties; she was carried down and put into a coach, to be taken before the sitting magistrates. Hannah, locking up her doors, followed weeping, and wringing her hands, accompanied by the neighbours, from different motives, to the place where the rotation was held; they were there as soon as the coach; and Anna was lifted out, being utterly unable to stand, and carried before the bench, which consisted of three magistrates.

One was a short thick man, with very spiteful blue eyes; so gouty, as to be scarcely able to walk from the door to his chair: he had, from a very mean original, wormed himself into credit, and, after carrying on a great shew of trade for a very few years, commenced bankrupt, paid the enormous composition of two and sixpence in the pound; and having got his certificate, by his indefatigable services, at a general election, to the successful candidate, was put into commission of the peace, in which, with some private resources, he contrived to pick up the means of a genteel living: He was an inflexible advocate for justice, a constant friend to the fortunate, and an inveterate enemy to all rogues *who were poor*. His name was Atwood.

Next him sat a tall, lusty, fair man, pompous in his manner, florid in his speech, and a prodigious admirer of his own sense and dignity. When I say he was a contractor, I need not add he was rich. He was at this period famous for his opposition to that government under which he had got a fortune, and the public vilifier of the prince who had honoured him with a title: he was fond of making speeches; affected so tender a heart, that he has been known to shed tears at a sessions, with his spread hands on his heart, in behalf of a petition from a commissioner of the turnpikes and high roads,

roads, while his callous heart retreated from the woes of his own blood, and turned a deaf ear to the pleas of the distressed of all denominations; a vociferous assertor of public justice, and a private violator of every humane tie; so humble, that he would tell you how destitute of friends, money, or recommendation, he first entered on the theatre of life; and so proud, that no society was any longer tolerable to him, than it was filled with wonder at his riches and grandeur, and bowed the knee of adulation to his prodigious abilities. This magistrate was called Sir Richard Peacock.——On his right hand sat a fat dark man, with a kind of a black and blue complexion; who, though here in all the pomp of magistracy, scowled his gray grizzly brows round the hall with an assumed fullness and pride; at home, in his own shop, would weigh a halfpenny worth of plums to a beggar's nephew, dust the gold sugar-loaf over his door, sweep the front of his house, or any other odd matter that required doing.

He was rich enough to satisfy a miser, and saving enough to please one: his canvas apron answered two purposes; it preserved his black stuff breeches, and it saved a pocket handkerchief; that, and a night-cap, *once* white, were the ensigns by which this magistrate was known in the place where he lived; but under those very unfavourable appearances, he carried a tender, and even a generous heart, at times when he condescended to put off the importance of his character; and when he dispensed with the dear idea of money-getting, the milk of human kindness warmed his heart; and that purse he had taken such pains to fill, was liberally opened to the calls of friendship and humanity; and this, to do him justice, was not seldom.

C H A P.

C H A P. LXX.

The Friend in Need.

WHEN Anna was brought through a mob of runners, constables, disputants, and pickpockets, before those august personages, sinking with apprehensions, and overcome with fear, she ventured to raise her eyes to the awful tribunal before whom she was to be examined.

From the prejudices of first appearances, the grey locks of Atwood gave her hopes, which the mild-looking Sir Richard confirmed ; but from the bent brow of Mr. Sago her soul shrunk.

Mrs. Desmoulins, though upwards of fifty, dressed in the pink and the height of the mode, was honoured with a seat within the bar, while the poor culprit, in whose countenance modesty and delicacy were strongly delineated, and whose pallid cheeks carried evidence of weakness and ill health, supported herself by leaning on the bar ; Hannah not being able to squeeze up to her, surrounded by men whose appearances struck her with terror.

Mr. Desmoulins likewise soon made his appearance ; when respect to their dress induced the worthy magistrates to give them an instant hearing.

Mr. Desmoulins, in a most polite style, told them, he was in despair at the trouble he was obliged to give them ; that the person who had the honour of appearing at the bar, was one in whom he had placed great confidence ; that he had the mortification to find himself deceived in her ; and it was with great regret and repugnance he did himself

himself the honour of charging her with a de-fraud.

“ Who are you, Sir, what is your name, and “ where do you reside ?” demanded Justice Atwood.

With an important bow he was going to answer, when Mrs. Desmoulins interrupted him.

“ Lord, Louis, what signifies your going such “ a round about tale to their honours ; please you, “ my Lord, I keep the star and garter embroidery “ warehouse in Pall Mall ; we work for all the “ people of fashion ; and this girl being no better “ than she should be, came to us for employ.”

“ What,” interrupted Atwood, “ she is a-a,— “ you understand me.”

“ Yes, indeed, Sir, she is no better than a “ kept woman ; and we, out of compassion, em- “ ployed her ; for, God be praised, we want not “ for hands or business, or, indeed, what we may “ live on without it.”

“ Bring a chair for this here lady, and that there gentleman,” said the civil justice. “ Now, Ma- “ dam, we can hear, when you can speak, with “ more ease to yourself.”

“ Well, please your Worship, a lady of the “ first quality, we work for few others, sent us a “ job, and my foolish husband would make me “ give it her, together with the coat finished by “ way of pattern ; and now, when it should be “ done, she has made away with it.”

“ Well, young woman,” said Sir Richard, “ you hear the enormity of the crime of which you “ are charged—you have, it seems, been guilty “ of a two-fold of-fence, you have be-tray-ed the “ con-fi-dence pla-ced in you by these wor-thy peo- “ ple, and you have de-fraud-ed them of their “ pro-per-ty. I pro-fess, my heart bleeds, it drops, “ I say, blood, to see such wick-ed-ness in so young “ a creature.

“ a creature. What is your name ?”—a pause—
“ why do you not speak ? what is your name ?”

“ Why don’t you answer his worship ?” said the constable who had brought her there.

It was impossible—the agony of her soul was too strong for utterance ; speech was denied her ;—and an obstinate silence being imputed to her in contempt of justice, oaths were prepared to be administered to the prosecutors, and Anna ordered to be committed, when Mr. Sago approached her, looking under his bent brow, filled her with fresh terror ; her eyes were involuntarily averted, and her head turned from him.

Viewing her earnestly, “ Can nobody be found ?” said he, in a softened voice, “ have you nobody, “ child, who will be bail for you ? for gentlemen,” turning to his brethren, “ according to the story “ of the prosecutor, and we have not heard the “ poor girl, this at the worst can be but a breach “ of trust ; have you nothing to say for yourself, “ child ?” said he, turning tenderly to her.

Speech, with a violent gush of sorrow, was now lent her :—with her spread hands on her face, while the tears dropped through her fingers, “ Oh, “ Sir !” exclaimed she, “ may the blessings of the “ broken hearted attend you—indeed I am wrong- “ ed ; I would have paid the value of the work “ which was stolen from my apartment.”

“ Have you any one to speak to your character ?”

“ Character,” repeated Mrs. Desmoulins, “ she “ robbed the lady where she lived last, and has “ since been upon the town—character indeed !”

“ Is this true, child ?” said Sago.

“ Good God, Sir, no ! for heaven’s sake what “ lady do you allude to ? and what do you mean “ by the town ?”

“ I mean

“ I mean Lady Edwin who knows you to be a thief.”

“ Take care, Madam,” said Anna, some remains of her pride, uniting with conscious innocence, “ wretched and friendless as I now appear, there are in the world (bursting into a fresh flood of tears) those that will support my innocence, and vindicate my character. Lady Edwin herself would be one of the first to join in the punishment of such a cruel calumny.”

“ Come, come, woman,” sternly said Sir Richard, “ you are charged on the oath of Mr. and Mrs. Desmoulins, both people of undoubted credit, with a de-fraud ; and if you have not good and sufficient bail, to prison you must go : *my time*, and that of my brethren on the bench, is too precious to waste with your equivocations. I am, myself, obliged, (looking round him with great dignity) to attend the national affairs of the realm. What say you, Mr. a-a—you, Sir, the keeper of the prison ?”

Anna looked up ; her pride again forsook her, in the horror of associating with the wretches she beheld, of being dragged away among the abandoned of both sexes ; she was sensible only to terror ; and throwing herself on her knees, she addressed Mrs. Desmoulins :

“ Have pity on my youth, Madam ; consider I am of your own sex ; for the honour of humanity, spare me.”

“ So I will, if you confess ; so I will, if you tell me where the work may be recovered ; but not else.”

The husband, a little mollified, would now have interfered, but that served only as oil on a flame ; his wife’s passion increased, and Anna was on the point of being dragged away, though Mr. Sago wished still to be favourable ; but Mrs. Desmoulins
unfortunately

unfortunately asking him if “ he would make good “ her loss ?” an end was put to the affair ; when good fortune, in the shape of Mr. Bently, pushed in. His person was, as well as his great fortune, known to the worshipful Bench ; the bar was lifted up ; but instead of availing himself of that honour, he seized hold of Anna, and lugging her in, the tears rolling down his venerable face.

“ Ten, ten thousand pounds bail for her ; will that do, Sir Richard ; will that do, Mr. Atwood !” and shaking with his vacant hand the thumb of the grocer, “ will that do ?”

The general surprize of these distributors of justice, and the people who were present, soon gave way to the respect due to a young person under the avowed protection of so rich a man.

“ Did I not bid you, my amiable girl, seek a “ friend at the Abbey ?” said Mr. Bently, as soon as his emotions would let him ; “ why did you not “ come to me ?”

The agony and weakness of our heroine when her guardian angel entered, was converted to astonishment ; how, in the moment when all hope was lost, when on the very verge of despair, could she believe she was really in the hands of a friend, willing and able to preserve her from wrong, to protect her from insult ! the sudden transition from sorrow to joy was too much for her reduced spirits. Way was now made for Hannah, every body pitied her distress ; Mr. Atwood offered his own chair, it being an armed one, and Sir Richard had a bottle of *eau-de-luce* at her service ; he had even a tear ready to squeeze out at sight of so lovely a creature’s indisposition. Sago lamented secretly the want of his canvas apron ; and Mrs. Desmoulins, to the astonishment of her husband, was silent.

As Anna revived, her gratitude, too strong for words, vented itself in a plentiful shower of tears ;
—they

---they were not the only ones shed on the occasion. Sir Richard, as I have said before, had a very convenient knack at weeping where he was sure no advantage could be taken at the *appearance* of humanity ; so that on the present occasion, he even fobbed.

Bently---but I must here beg one word with my reader on the subject of a weakness many people blush at. I will acknowledge a watery head, in some cases, to be the sign of a weak heart ; it was in Sir Richard more, it was the mark of a wicked, hypocritical one : but hallowed, for ever hallowed be the spontaneous and involuntary drops excited by humanity, and enforced by compassion, which are often seen to flow from the soul of bravery itself, and grace the face of undaunted courage ; *yes*, the same eyes from whence, in the service of their country, or in the cause of honour, courageous flashes of sacred fire have struck confusion into the hearts of their enemies ; at thy shrine, oh, heaven-born sympathy, how they have been suffused !

Bently wept like a child.

“ When you wanted a friend, Miss Mansel,
 “ why did you not come to me ?” said he. “ Alas !
 “ poor girl, once acquainted with the villany of a
 “ Sutton, who shall condemn thee for distrust-
 “ ing all mankind ? I have watched, followed,
 “ and tried thee : my soul, like thy own, rent with
 “ sorrow, and robbed of all its hopes, will receive
 “ a guest which had long forsook its habitation.
 “ In raising thy modest merit I will be joyful—and
 “ in making that beauty, innocence, and honour,
 “ which was denied pity, enviable, I will feel hap-
 “ piness. For you, good woman, go home—
 “ I have reconciled the loss of her gown to the
 “ Duchess ; and if you find you are no longer ho-
 “ noured with the sanction and custom of that
 “ family,

“ family, attribute it to their native benevolence,
 “ which will not suffer them to bestow their favour
 “ on savages. Go !”

How beautiful is goodness ! how awful the emanation of an upright mind ! the words that were uttered by this honest man struck all present with respect ; *he* was *no* magistrate—but those *who were*, shrunk into nothing with the sense of their own littleness, interrupted not his decision.

Mrs. Desmoulins with a front equally devoid of gentleness or modesty, felt abashed, and retired without answering the respectable monitor ; and her husband, who found the natural complacency he had for his own dear sweet self, increased by the consciousness of the mercy he had wished to shew, marched after her, backward, bowing all the way, with a mixture of triumph and respect in his countenance.

Sir Richard had now began an harangue : “ It gives me,” said he, “ the great-est plea-sure—It gives me the sa-tis-fac-ti-on—nay it gives me the great-est—a-a-a—that is to say, I am glad, very glad, an af-fair so black (knitting his brow) in the be-gin-ning, should turn out so white (smiling) in the end ; and that the handsome lady in the chair——”

“ Sir,” interrupted Bently, “ I beg your pardon ; I must thank you another time for what you are pleased to say in favour of that lady, but at present she is too much agitated to attend to it—we will therefore beg to be excused.” He was then going to lead her out, when a large concourse of people were seen advancing to the office, and three gentlemen, whose independent circumstances and good sense kept them, though in the same commission, from often appearing at the Rotation in company with the trading justices, entered, followed by as great a number of people as could squeeze in.

in. It was now impossible for Anna, in her present weak state, to pass.

The civil Mr. Atwood therefore intreated her to retire into a little inner room behind where they sat, which offer she gladly accepted. Bently was following—when among the new comers he beheld Dalton,—he did not mention this circumstance to Anna ; but as soon as he was satisfied in respect to her accommodation, left her and returned to the justice-room.

C H A P. LXXI.

Proves our Heroine had a Father.

A GENTEEL looking elderly man, very much sun burnt, by whose side stood a younger man of the same description, told a plain and moving tale ; he said his name was Mordant ; he was a native of South Wales ; that he had when young an only sister, the greatest beauty of the time, who captivated, at the age of eighteen, the son and heir of a noble family in their neighbourhood ; but though a great and unincumbered estate, with the vast personal riches, descending from the several branches of their house, were all vested in the father of this young man, no intreaties whatever could induce him to listen to the petition of his son in behalf of his love, although pride far more than his desire of wealth opposed his happiness. As their house boasted a long line of ancestors, not one of whom *had* married out of the best blood in the principality, and *his* father was the son of a tradesman who

who dealt in butter and oats, the produce of that country ; that finding the young gentleman was bent on marrying the object of his affection, the father had him seized, and with unrelenting rigour confined him in a remote part of his large mansion four years, having made a vow he should never see the sun till the young woman was dead or married, or till he gave his honour to think on her no more ; that his sister being in a deplorable state of health, their father dead, and themselves invited to an uncle at Jamaica, he had contrived, at her request, to scale the out-side of the castle, and delivered the young man from his confinement, who set out immediately with them. He married his sister at the seaport from whence they sailed, vowing never to return to his family till they received his beloved wife with him, and soon reached the place of their destination. The happiness of the new married pair increasing with their family, the husband declared his intention of renouncing his country, and all of his blood who would not acknowledge his wife—A short time after they arrived the uncle died, leaving them joint heirs to his trade and fortune ; they entered into partnership and lived in equal harmony and happiness, till a fatal epidemic fever carried off both their wives, and all his partner's children but one, the youngest, a female ; that a woman who had nursed his sister, and who having attended her abroad, had been much beloved by her, recovered of the fever which she caught from her mistress, but fell into a decline which was pronounced to be incurable by any thing but her native air ; and on this, it being near the time proper to send his little daughter, as is there customary, to England for education, and unwilling the poor invalid should go by herself, he had taken that opportunity to bring over his child ; and as (if the old woman recovered) he would wish her to
continue

continue in England (merely that she might be near her) to leave her comfortably settled; for which purpose, as he meant to return by the first ship, and chose to avoid any possible rencontre with his family, who he more than ever disliked since the death of his wife, instead of taking it from their correspondents here, he brought money with him for the purpose of sinking it into an annuity for the life of the old servant; that they arrived safe in the Downs, when the woman being extremely ill, and desirous of reaching London for advice immediately, they had left the ship there in order to proceed to town, leaving the principal part of their baggage on board; since which he had never been able to trace, by any means whatever, what had become of either his brother-in-law, his niece, or the nurse, the ship having returned without their things being ever landed, or the Captain's seeing or hearing any thing of them; that he continued to trade in their joint names till he had accumulated beyond his expectation; and his uneasiness increasing instead of decreasing, he had brought his son over himself six years ago to finish his education, solely for the purpose of making inquiries after his lost friend; that he continued in England twelve months, and at length returned, having vainly inquired not only of his family, the old Lord being dead, but at every probable place, without being able to obtain the least intelligence concerning him; that he had concluded they were murdered for the sake of the money his partner carried with him; and this shocking surmise was confirmed about four months ago, in a manner the most providential and extraordinary.

A bricklayer, who had long worked on his estate, having emigrated to the Spanish settlements with a mulatto slave, his wife petitioned him for
means

means to return to her own country ; that he had paid her passage home, and gave the house he resided in to an old servant ; in clearing away the litter four bags, marked by that very servant 100 Gs. which his brother had taken with him, were found and brought to him ; that shocked and surprized beyond measure, he directly went after the man, but found the schooner he had sailed in was lost ; that not doubting his wife must be acquainted with the catastrophe, of which he had such strong apprehensions, he then came to England in pursuit of her, whom he easily traced ; and on questioning her about the bags, she readily acknowledged them ; but said her husband had received the money from a clergyman, who, after much difficulty, he likewise traced, though he had great reason to suppose it an evasion, and had sent a card to him to beg his attendance, and he was now present ; he intreated they would please to examine the woman strictly, that if the blood of the worthiest of men, and his innocent child, had been spilt, vengeance might be taken.

Such a story, told with every appearance of truth and feeling, could not but have a partisan in the heart of every auditor ; and the woman being put to the same bar, where an hour before our heroine stood an instance of persecuted innocence, one of the gentlemen magistrates exhorted her to be careful not to vary from the truth in her examination, as circumstances of a heinous nature, which had already come out, would be aggravated and confirmed by her prevarications. She was then shewn the bags, and repeated her story, adding, the person's name, from whom her husband received them, was Dalton : he was on this desired to walk forward.

From the instant the avaricious wretch saw the bags, and heard what was going forward, he gave himself

himself up for lost ; but when he found, the man who had received them of him was dead, and only the hearsay evidence of his wife, he wisely concluded, his No, as good as her Yes ; he therefore positively denied the whole matter : the woman persisted in her story : he in denying it :—when another, to him unwelcome stranger, made her way through the croud : this was Mrs. Clarke, who arrived at her house about two hours after Anna was carried, as we have related ; from thence, hearing from the neighbourhood what had happened, she flew to the office ; and pushing through the mob, weeping and lamenting, the first person who struck her eyes was Dalton—concluding he was there on behalf of Anna.

“ Oh thank God,” said she, “ you are here—
“ Where is the dear child ? it will kill her—She
“ was all but dead when I left her—Nothing else
“ should have brought me home so soon.”

“ *Who ?*” answered Dalton, not a little confounded at the appearance of the only witness that could have been brought in the world to confront him ;
“ do you rave ?”

“ Rave !” said she, “ you are enough to make
“ one rave ; why is not Miss Mansel here ?”

Bently, who now understood her to be the friend of his charge, beckoned her to him, and the examination went on—the woman begged before her commitment was signed, to be once more heard.

She then asked the Doctor, if, seventeen years ago, he had not laid out some money on a chapel in Stepney Fields ?

“ That he did, poor man,” said Mrs. Clarke,
“ every body knows that, and how that villain,
“ White, ran away with it ; I am sure I pitied
“ him from my heart.

A general confusion now for a moment ensued—the merchant and justices were unanimous in calling on Mrs. Clarke for farther information; but no farther could she give; yet it was circumstantial evidence; and Dalton was told he must be included in the commitment.

Overpowered by guilt and shame, the narrow-souled being stood for some moments in suspense—when his cunning, which generally was his very good friend, taught him a new lesson—he requested the court might be cleared, and then humbly prostrating himself at the feet of the merchant, he confessed the whole matter as we have before related it; alledged that neither the child nor money being claimed, he was tempted to make use of it, and having been so unfortunate as to be cheated by the rogue, White, he had never acknowledged having had money it was not in his power to repay.

“But where is my child—where is she—does she exist?—Let us go to her,” said the merchant now more confounded than before.

Dalton was beginning an excuse, when Bently stepping forward and addressing himself to the stranger, said he would save Dalton the trouble of farther relation, by informing him, that she had for good causes left his house, and after defrauding her of fourteen hundred pounds, he had stopped her clothes, on the demand of one hundred and fifty pounds more for a few years board, which sum had been actually received from a young libertine by whom she was said to have been kept.

“Oh! my poor girl,” cried the merchant shedding tears—“but she will see her error—she will be one of the first fortunes in the kingdom—he may marry her.”

“No, no, that cannot be,” said Mr. Bently.

“Why will you say so, Sir?” returned he.

“For

“ For a very good reason, he is married already.”

“ Wretch,” answered the merchant, turning to Dalton, “ what hast thou to answer for.”

“ Oh, nothing to speak of,” returned Bently, “ for the truth is, she never was kept by the said libertine—that was indeed nothing to Dalton, he fingered the money ; but come, Sir, if I restore your niece, will you engage never to rob me of my child ?” So saying, he retired to the room where Anna was, followed by the two gentlemen, father and son, and Mrs. Clarke, who immediately embracing her, lamented being out of the way when such an indignity had been offered to her.

But more interesting scenes now engaged the attention of our heroine—the merchant burst into tears the instant he saw her—it was his very sister—there needed no witness but her countenance—he should have known her from thousands.

The young man throwing himself at her feet in a transport, exclaimed, “ it was then more than mere passion, it was the blessed emanation of blood that so irresistibly drew every faculty of my soul to my lovely cousin ; this, Sir, is the amiable creature I represented to you as my first and only love, my charming cousin, will you not speak to your nearest relation, your Mordant ?”

Surprize at those salutations was tempered with a pleasing expectation of their meaning : Anna’s heart throbbed with joy at the idea of finding at last somebody who would own her. To hear herself addressed as dear cousin, and as dearer niece, by two such respectable characters ; to be caressed as the likeness of an amiable mother, to feel herself intitled to ties hitherto unknown to her, but which her heart had often panted after, was such
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an excess of pleasure, that all the past misfortunes, even the loss of Herbert was forgot.

Her uncle folded her to his bosom, while his son, loath for a moment to give up his claim of tenderness, bathed her hands with drops of congenial love and warm affection. Mrs. Clarke was not forgot in the general joy ; and Bently affected a discontent at being thus robbed of her he had adopted, under which were visible benevolent beams of the most heartfelt satisfaction.

Mr. Mordant proposed to his niece to return to Mrs. Clarke's till he could procure lodgings fit to receive her.—This was opposed by Bently, who said Miss Mansel was engaged to meet some ladies at a friend of his ; Anna looked surprised,—she knew not yet even the means by which he had found her ; and much less could she guess at the company he talked of ; but he was too positive to be ruled, and too happy to be reasonable ; and, therefore, insisted on the whole group crowding in to the coach. One event more, however, was to crown the morning's adventure ; just as they were going out, young Edwin entered ; he came in the utmost haste to relieve Anna from the misfortune in which his servant's officious zeal for his wishes had involved her—Really shocked at the consequence of an act he had applauded, and which, in hopes to have his offers of service accepted, had carried him to her lodgings, he set out with equal haste to prevent her being insulted with a charge of so ignominious a nature.

As soon as Bently saw him, with a very sarcastical smile, he congratulated him on chusing to forfeit his recognizance rather than appear at the horse-whipping affair ; and begged to have the honour of repaying him the hundred and fifty pounds he had so generously advanced for Miss Mansel's clothes to Dalton.

"Why, surely," said the elder Mordant, "Mr. Edwin cannot be the person who did it?"

"There he is," said Bently, "if his infamous plans had succeeded, which, thank God, they did not, he is too much of a Welchman to deny a fact he would cut your throat for charging him with."

"Really, Sir," answered Edwin, with a scornful frown, "your language is unintelligible to me."

"May be so, may be so," answered Bently, "it is plain English though, but I have no time to throw away—come, Madam," taking Anna's hand from her uncle, "lead the way to your own carriage."

Edwin all astonished, called on young Mordant, who, with a very ill grace, suffered the happy party to proceed without him, while he went into a tavern to recount particulars, which in every part cut his auditor to the soul, and then followed his father by the directions Bently gave him, to Mrs. Wellers' in Charter-house square.

C H A P. LXXII.

An Old Man's Perseverance.

IT is now proper to inform the reader of the happy accident which brought about this event with respect to Bently. I have before said, he made a strict, and the reader will conclude, a fruitless search after Anna. He returned to the Abbey in the utmost dejection of spirit at his disappointment, when

when Mrs. Wellers sent for him to give him what farther particulars she had heard of our heroine. What appeared to her an inexplicable mystery, was immediately developed by him, who knew well the founder of her disgrace at Melmoth Lodge, her accuser at Lady Edwin's, and her persecutor at Layton, was one and the same person. So rooted, indeed, was his contempt and hatred for that Nobleman, that no crime appeared to him too black to be perpetrated by him; and Anna's refusal to become his wife, while it added to her credit in the opinion of Mrs. Wellers, endeared her to his soul. He heard, with indignation, the farther reports from the Daltons of Edwin's paying their demand, and possessing himself of her cloaths,—but rightly concluding, though he had before watched that young man in all his manœuvres without success, that he must now have acquired some knowledge of her, he set off for London; and having again set his spy to work, learnt (although, it being while Wilkinson was in town, the master did not see her he was in search of) that his favourite man took very frequent journeys into the city, it one day entered his head to watch him, and having lodged him at Clarke's, went to the opposite side to a snuff shop, in order to find out what people kept the house; the answer he received being only, that it was an old woman and her daughter, and the man who had just entered was sweetheart to the latter, he was on the point of going off, satisfied this was not the road to his wished discovery, when happening to look up, he saw Anna removing a blind from the window, which, as the day was shutting in, obstructed the light, and sit down at her frame to work, he retreated back almost stagnated.—Too likely, now, even to him, were the reports to her disadvantage; indeed if Edwin kept her, it was not probable his large fortune and small stock of pru-

dence would have fixed on such a situation for his mistress ;—but then he was lately married, and secrecy on that account might be necessary :—in a word, he had almost given her up, when the woman of the shop, addressing her husband, remarked how industrious that poor sick young woman was. “ She is now,” added she, “ poring between the lights,—no wonder she looks so ill ; poor thing, “ I am sure she does not eat the bread of idleness.”

This caught his attention—and seeing a bill for a two pair of stairs front room to be let to a single man, he immediately took it, and mounting his new lodging, had then watched our heroine, till he was convinced her own labour supported her, as he overlooked her whenever he pleased.

Satisfied with his observations, and knowing she was an orphan, himself being childless, and without a relation in the world, he immediately formed the resolution of adopting her, and went to Layton to communicate his discoveries and intentions to Mrs. Wellers.

On the day after Mr. Bates gave his master such a proof of his dexterity, it was agreed Mr. Bently should go to Anna in the morning, make known his intention, and bring her to young Mrs. Wellers', where Mrs. Wellers was to meet them to dinner, and take our heroine home with her till Mr. Bently should regulate his house, (now a mere bachelor's) fit to receive a mistress, and procure a companion for her of such reputation as might prevent the busy and censorious world from glancing at scandal.

The mutual pleasure the meeting at Mrs. Wellers' gave our heroine, and a lady she both loved and esteemed, is not to be told. When the transactions of the morning, and the happy conclusions with Mr. Mordant's story, which Anna had not before heard, were repeated, even Mr. Wellers, with all his apathy, was affected ;—Anna threw herself

herself into her uncle's arms, in expressive, though speechless acknowledgements, for his kind and unwearied solicitude to discover her, which had the greater merit, as he declared half his fortune was, in justice, hers. It now came to Anna's turn to be the relator ; every heart of the present auditor's, Mr. Wellers' only excepted, who, for the generality, had no heart at all, was actuated by the same spring, universal benevolence, and kindness to all their fellow creatures. When, therefore, the distress, illness, and sufferings of this innocent young woman came to be exhibited by the voice of truth, could they be less than affected ? No eye was dry, no heart but gave the tribute due to such unmerited sorrow, nor any one but felt, with an excess of pleasure, the happy change in her affairs. Mrs. Wellers insisted, and Mr. Mordant consented, Anna should go home with her till she could be settled. —Bently hallowed, sung, whistled, and wept all the way home ; his exertion of spirit, indeed, was not to be wondered at, since, for the first time he had tasted any thing but water for twenty years, he had drank a pint bumper of claret. At parting, Mr. Mordant put into his niece's hand a pocket-book, in which were two thousand pounds in bank notes.——“ Reward, my love,” said he, “ your
“ friends, and humble your enemies, by shewing
“ them lessons of true generosity ; all narrow sentiments are now beneath you ; you are yet ignorant of the rank you are entitled to ; munificence and greatness of soul are the hereditary
“ rights of your blood ; and Providence has amply
“ supplied you with the means of being respectable as well as rich.”—With those kind admonitions he left her, positively refusing his consent to his son's attending her to Layton, as he earnestly requested.

C H A P. LXXIII.

A Revival of past Scenes.

IN the journey from London to the Hill, the sensations of Anna were, at first, too strong for expression ; but as they proceeded, in the language of pure and unaffected gratitude to the wise disposer of all events, she drew an affecting picture of her different feelings now, and when the last time she travelled the same road. How full of sorrow and anguish did she leave her then home ! how many reluctant thoughts, at quitting the friendship of the good Mrs. Wellers ! how infinite her distress in the present, and her despair in the future, prospects ! she recognized the spot where Lord Sutton and Dalton passed her, and tears gushed from her eyes, when she saw the stile from whence she took the stage.

Now she was returning, no longer the poor orphan, flying from the horror of a prison, and the tyranny of those to whose vain-glorious charity she supposed her existence was owing ; or going a poor outcast to seek her bread, in a world, where she seemed to stand alone, but triumphant, and abounding in friends, riches, and honour ; overpowered with the different sensations arising from those reflections, she sunk in tears into the arms of her friend. Charmed at the whole of her behaviour, Mrs. Wellers applauded the natural gratitude

titude of her disposition, but begged she would, at least for the present, drop all painful recollections of the past, in the opening felicity she might now justly expect, with this one reflection, which time and fifty years experience had taught her.

That patience and resignation are only wanting to convince the most afflicted of mankind, that the present calamity, be it ever so bitter, and hard to be borne, leads in some shape or other, to succeeding good.

In this happy conclusion they reached the hill, and were there most affectionately received by Mr. Wellers, and welcomed by Dr. Collet, whose sincere congratulations, and lively friendship, a little dispelled the gloom recollection had begun to cast over our heroine's countenance; as her mind grew composed, the fatigues of the day were visible to her friends, and painful to herself; by their effect on her health, Dr. Collet declared saline draughts, and rest, were absolutely necessary; Mrs. Clarke, who attended her, anxiously urged her to follow his advice, and she retired immediately to bed, but not to rest.

Her feelings soon convinced her, however eligible to the support of a mere existence money and friends were, the latent disease of the mind was as much out of their reach, as out of the power of medicine. Herbert, dear amiable Herbert, was he alive, to share with her those unexpected gifts of fortune; could she have put it in his power, to add to the happiness of the worthy Mrs. Herbert, of her dear Patty; to render him independent of his proud cousins, that were a gratification worthy living for! to tell him by all her actions, how the philanthropy of his disposition, the goodness of his heart, the purity of his sentiments, had now on
her

her soul, were a happiness, inferior only to heaven itself!

But of this felicity she was for ever deprived, and this, in the waywardness of human nature, was all she coveted; it was in vain she condemned her own want of thankfulness to heaven for its bounties, and attempted to sooth her ideas with the many, many sources of happiness in her power, that crowded to court her acceptance; still thought, hopeless thought, hung on his dear image, and her heart recoiled from pleasures, Herbert could not share.

The morning found her with increased fever, but with appearance of its again intermitting; medicine did little for her; a hectic habit, Collet feared, was gaining on her constitution; Mr. Mordant's anxious apprehensions were only to be equalled by those of his son's; Mrs. Wellers felt as for her own daughter; and Mr. Bently was half distracted; a consultation of physicians was held, and he, at his very earnest request, indulged with being present: he had a smattering of physic, just enough to render him inquisitive, as an employer for others, and very troublesome as a patient himself; he would not only know the quality, but the quantity, of the prescriptions, and in the case of Anna, would himself administer them.

In a few days her fever abated, but languor and depression of spirits still continued; nothing seemed to give her either pain, or pleasure. In this unpleasant state, Mr. Mordant was obliged to leave her with Mrs. Wellers, having business of the utmost importance to transact at a distance from the metropolis, whither his son accompanied him. The evening after their departure, she saw Polly Dalton, the friend of her juvenile years, pass by. Ah, my God! exclaimed she, how, my dear friends, could you suffer me to be so long near
Layton,

Layton, without once seeing, or even enquiring after Mrs. Dalton and her family! You might, answered Mrs. Wellers, have been silent about them for ever, without incurring any blame from us. Oh! say not so, madam; you know not how good Mrs. Dalton, nor how affectionate that young person, who now passed, always was to me! Pray indulge me by sending for her, I have so often called, and who, in every instance, acted like a mother by me; for as to Lord Sutton, I am convinced, they would be still more vehement in his behalf with a child of their own. Charming girl, said Mr. Bently, though they merit every punishment for driving such a mind to despair, I will myself be the messenger of your wishes and away he went. Anna, in the mean while, pleasing herself with the happiness her affectionate heart predetermined to bestow on Mrs. Dalton. Mr. Bently, however, returned without her; she and her husband were both gone to town.

Mr. Thornhill had heard of his conduct towards Anna, and sent him his discharge from the meeting; for though he had engaged to give him fifty pounds a year for life, he had the honour of his maker too firmly at heart, to suffer that agreement to operate, as an obligation, to continue a man in a pulpit, he had endowed, who was proved to act in opposition to the divine tenets of christianity.

Despairing now of ever obtaining any employ about London, he agreed with his wife to retire to some distant part of the world, where, with the interest of her fortune, and Mr. Thornhill's annuity, they might live, and be out of the reach of any farther molestation from Mr. Mordant or his niece; a farm, advertised to be sold in Cornwall, was that day their business from home. Mr. Bently knew the earnestness of Anna to see

the Daltons proceeded from the rectitude of her principles, and drawing a favourable omen from the interest he observed her to take in their affairs, told her, if she was not too much disappointed in her expectation of killing time, which he was grieved to see hung heavy on her hands, he would, if she would accept his company, have a little chat with her himself.

Anna could not, consistent either with good nature, or good manners, decline his offer, more especially as the manner he made it, seemed to have a meaning beyond his words.

Mrs. Wellers, laughing, said, she supposed the doctor and herself were to be excluded this *tete a tete*. Oh, by no means, answered Mr. Bently; I only mean to convince this girl she is an ingrate. The wan cheeks of Anna exhibited a faint blush at this accusation of a vice she most abhorred, though the looks of her accuser spoke the kindest things; however, being seated, he addressed her in a very serious tone, charging her with the concealment of some hidden grief, which he was certain, preyed on her spirits, and if not combated with resolution, would (he meant not to alarm her, but here plain dealing was absolutely necessary) undermine her constitution, and carry her in the prime of her days, into eternity. The averted eye, and glowing cheeks of Anna, encouraged him to proceed.—Whatever was the malady of the mind, which was of too sacred a nature for the participation of her friends, its consequence was ingratitude. Anna started; and seeing, in the serious cast of his countenance, he then really meant to reproach her, with tears and heart-felt sighs only could she answer. He continued: you have been, my beloved Anna, from the age of three years, to now, that you are entered on your twenty-first, the peculiar care of heaven; behold
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the providential love of that being, of whose blessings you are insensible, whose gifts you so little prize; the unfortunate death of your father, a stranger, and unknown, was instantly supplied out of the very bosom of corrupted avarice; and then you received your education by another miracle, such as a mind and talents like yours deserved. I have myself known some women, who acquitted themselves with decency and propriety, in character of governesses; but your Mrs. Mansel, was selected by the hand of heaven, on purpose to bring to perfection the fairest blossom of the creation; through what scenes of distress, persecution, and temptation, has your life, and, what is of far more consequence, your honour, been preserved from the verge of despair? you see yourself safe in the protection of relations, whose happiness is centered in yours, of friends, who would sacrifice any worldly thing to contribute to your ease, and who exult in the triumph of virtue over vice; is not then your continued dejection ungrateful to God, to your relations, and to your friends? you must confess it is, but I have a charge still more heinous to bring against you.

Oh! spare me, dear sir; I am very culpable, very weak; but indeed I do try to exert myself, to return, in some degree, your kindness, and Mrs. Wellers in particular, who was so good to me, when I had no other friend; who took up the cause of my orphan and distressed state, when the world seemed savagely set against it; but fate is not to be resisted, she continued weeping, I have no heart for happiness.

Mistaken woman; it is not only to be resisted, but overcome; call forth the faculties of your mind, employ them in acts of beneficence, search out the habitations of the wretched, learn the common woes human nature is subject to, feel for the
anxious

anxious mother, unable to satisfy the calls of hunger in her young ones, or let the sighs of the miserable father move thee, who mourns, perhaps, not only the loss of wealth in himself, but of honour in his posterity; see the deserted wife, callous to every calamity but the cruel one that wounds her bosom, rending the air with lamentations for the loss of her faithless husband; let your pity light on his drooping head, who having hoarded the treasure of his soul in one little casket, finds it rifled, and all his blooming hopes for ever blasted; if, he continued, you can trace sorrows like these, and such, be assured, there are in every habitable spot; seek the hapless orphan, if indeed your imagination sickens at the happiness in your power, extend it to them, for ends like these were you endowed with noble sentiments, a feeling heart, the love of virtue, and principles of justice; for them you were born, and preserved amid so many evils, and those will laudably employ your mind, and banish from them the woes which are potent only from inactivity.

Behold these white hairs; oh, Anna! could you know, could you conceive, the sorrows they cover, you would wonder, how I have attained the age they speak. Alas! alas! time, nor change of place, nor circumstances, can obliterate them from my memory; yet robbed in the cruelest manner of all my soul delighted in, I once gave myself up to despair; despair was a slow, a lingering period, to the misery I had not patience to endure a moment. I flew to liquor, to noisy, mad, immoral mirth, but in vain was every effort; the loss of reason soon succeeded loss of peace; not, indeed, till my fortune became the prey of the abandoned crew, with whom, in the desperation of a bursting heart, I plunged into vices and excesses, my soul abhorred.

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In one of the receptacles for unhappy lunatics, I should have dragged on a miserable existence, but for the love of a twin sister, who married very young, and accompanied her husband to India; she returned a widow, and immensely rich; enquired me out, took me to her house, and procured me all the assistance fraternal love, with the aid of wealth, could obtain, and I recovered to a sense of my horrible situation.

I soon recollected how my peace had been murdered, and my patrimony destroyed; the anguish of my woes renewed with the idea of again mixing in the world, where my all was lost; my dear Honoria foresaw it would, she therefore proposed changing the scene by travelling; we went, wherever fancy led, France, Italy, Spain, Holland, and Germany; my reason, blessed be God, fully returned; and my sister, being severely afflicted with a painful and lingering sickness, I had the consolation of being to her, what, dear amiable woman, she had so long been to me, a soothing companion in the hours of pain; she died leaving me her heir. I still continued rambling, till at length, the infirmities of age began to overtake me, rest and a home became necessary for a petulant old man; I returned to my country not to be known, for my name is not Bently, and here, in the exercises of benevolence, I have found the first respite from grief.

The Abbey which I purchased, is, I believe, going to decay; my mind finds the best employ in rendering comfortable the habitations of others; so that what company, dissipation, travel, or even madness, could not effect, the extending comfort to the afflicted, relieving the oppressed, cherishing the faint-hearted, and feeding the hungry, has done; it has banished self, and while I feel the sorrow

row of others, I likewise participate in comforts I am enabled to bestow.

Let us then, said the venerable Enthusiast, resolve, my Anna, to be happy; cheer thy gentle heart by dispelling grief from those of the less fortunate; I have enough and enough, for the purchases of generous charity, not to the clamorous beggar, nor to the hardened wanderer, but to the modest few, whose pride of heart, inspired by the honest dignity of inward rectitude, shrinks from the offered alm, will we turn our eyes. The dumb sorrow of those who recollect, with deep regret, the better fate of their earlier days, and who feel, in the sad reverse, pangs, to which the starving mendicant is a stranger, shall speak a language we will teach our souls to understand; nor will we refuse to hear the faltering voice of the repentant iniquity, while the still soft plaint of deserted infancy shall never be heard but to be relieved. Sweet picture of heaven, wilt thou not leave thy bed of sickness? wilt thou not exchange languor and melancholy, for joys like these?

Most gladly, dearest, honoured Sir, answered Anna, as soon as her admiration of the respectable monitor, her compassion for his misfortunes, and her entire approbation of his sentiment, would suffer her to speak; I feel, how very much I am to blame; we will lose no time; I am ready this moment to enter on the delightful task.

You must be well first, said he, pleased at the alacrity, with which his plan was adopted: and as a proof you mean to be so, you must now retire to rest, and not let the new avocation I recommend, occupy your thoughts to the prejudice of sleep.

She immediately complied with this injunction, and retired for the night.

Neither

Neither Mr. or Mrs. Wellers, any more than the doctor, had before heard any part of Mr. Bently's history; his charity and generosity were unbounded, and consequently his riches supposed to be immense, but he conversed with none of the polite inhabitants of Layton, except the family at the hill, and the poor and laborious, whose interests and whose misfortunes were infinitely below the attention of the quality of the place: it was, indeed, no great wonder they should not chuse to have their pleasures interrupted by evils they had already experienced, since, with very few exceptions, they had all known in their own original, the ills of poverty and hard labour, which, as they chose to forget, they flattered themselves other people would: not blessed with understanding enough to feel, it was their present vanity, not their former poverty, that was contemptible; Mr. Bently was a man of family and rank; he had been all his days accustomed to the manners of a gentleman, but he nevertheless preferred the society of uncultivated poverty, to that of unfeeling affluence; there was hardly a working pair in the neighbourhood, with whose affairs he was not perfectly conversant, or a child, who was not his particular acquaintance; he had a room at the Abbey full of toys of different sorts, which were constantly distributed, as rewards to his little favourites; he could not go two steps without having his advice asked, or his charity excited; but this mean turn exposed him to the scorn and derision of his polite neighbours, who, after wondering and condemning till they were weary, now seldom troubled themselves about him.

His title, when he bought the Abbey, was 'Squire; it had sunk into plain Mr. and was now got to Old Bently; something particular in his character

rafter had always appeared, which this voluntary account of himself explained greatly to his honour.

Mrs. Wellers was too much affected, as well as himself, to take any notice of his communication, farther than her tears expressed; Mr. Wellers took a religious fit; and Collet had twisted his cane string quite off, when, with the salutation of the evening, they parted.

C H A P. LXXIV.

New Schemes.

AS soon as Anna was alone, she went over in her mind, the arguments, as well as history, of her noble-minded friend; she acknowledged the justice of his reprehensions, and anticipated the comforts of those amusements he selected for her, and she followed his advice in letting her thoughts dwell on the felicity it was in her power to bestow.

What transports had she hitherto deprived herself of enjoying? Mr. Mansel, that dear friend, how could she so long forget the obligations she owed him! oh, that her dear maternal friend was living, to share her fortune, to guide her steps, to teach her fortitude, and direct the wanderings of her heart. The Daltons, she was determined, should be happy; Polly should live with her, and Mrs. Clarke should never know care; Mrs. Melmoth should be convinced her favours were not ill bestowed;

stowed; Mr. Melmoth, when he found, how strictly she had adhered to principles he had at first implanted in her mind, would rejoice; and if her fortune could do it, he should have cause; it should be the business of her existence to do honour to the gracious Being who, as Mr. Bently observed, had so miraculously preserved her in the first instance, and in the next, by such various and unforeseen means, expanded her understanding.

Those reflections kept her awake the most part of the night, but towards morning they had the salutary effect of composing her mind, and she fell into a sound sleep, from which she awoke, animated and refreshed.

Her restoration to health and spirits, was what Mr. Bently had very much at heart, he was not idle; he had seen Mrs. Dalton, and found great difficulty to prevail on her to go with her daughter to the hill; conscious of being in her husband's secret, though not a partner in his iniquitous designs of defrauding our heroine, she could not believe she was sent for, on any other occasion than to receive the just reproaches of an injured person, who had left their house, under the double apprehension of persecution and imprisonment; and her mortification at the severe and scornful look of Mrs. Wellers, confirmed those fears, notwithstanding Mr. Bently's encouragement.

The moment Anna was apprized of her visitors, instead of ordering them up to her, with the usual vivacity of her sensations, she hastily went to them, and throwing her arms round Mrs. Dalton's neck, burst into tears.

The poor woman, equally surprized and affected, kept an involuntary silence, while Anna, in the effusions of a tender and grateful heart, embraced them both, thanked the mother for every maternal

maternal act of kindness towards her, and promised the daughter never to forget their infant attachment.

Severer to Mrs. Dalton was this unexpected goodness, than the reproaches she expected; but as she really loved Anna, the pleasure of seeing her in such brilliant circumstances, gave additional force to the joy her promises inspired, and she presently forgot all disagreeable recollection of past events; she repeated with the same confidence and as little reserve as she would to her own daughter, the present situation and intention of her husband, on whom no intreaties could prevail to accompany them to the hill, a circumstance Anna very little regretted; she ventured to promise them ample assistance, but would not settle the bounty she meant to extend to them, till she had consulted Mr. Bently.

Mrs. Dalton then produced the watch and rings I before mentioned, and the reader may imagine she was not a little struck, on observing, some part of the arms was the same with that of Sir William Edwin's; she indeed recollected young Mordant's being treated with great kindness by the family, but never heard they were related, which being the only way she could account for the impression on her father's seal, left her puzzled but not interested; the object no longer existed, that could render her consanguinity with the Edwins of any importance to her, and as not only her peace, but health, was dependent on her efforts to forget them, she hurried the watch into her secretary, and sent Mrs. Dalton away happy and elated with her reception.

She then begged Mr. Bently and Mrs. Wellers's advice as to what could be done with propriety for a family, who, it was not enough to say she forgave, she actually loved them; humane and tender-hearted

hearted as Mrs. Wellers was on every other occasion, her love for Anna rendered her rather obdurate on this, but as she protested, her happiness was connected with theirs, and the generous Bently applauding her motive, she persisted; and he, as the first proof of her obedience to her adopted father, insisted on her taking from him a paper, ready drawn and signed, containing an annuity of one hundred pounds a year to Mrs. Dalton during her life, and to her children at her death; he would not be refused, it was his own gratification he was seeking, and must be suffered to go on his own way.

I need not say this was the road to happiness in the estimation of the Daltons, more especially as with the same packet, Anna told them her intentions of taking Polly to wait on her, and inclosed a bill to equip her for that purpose; Mr. Bently himself called on them, and commended their intentions to remove out of the reach of the tale which had just transpired; he advised their going as soon as Mr. Mordant's return should satisfy them any farther testimony on Miss Mansel's account was unnecessary.

Mrs. Clarke was next dispatched, her purse, sufficiently furnished to pay her rent and other little debts, which had long hung heavy on her mind; she was instructed to part with her house and business, with all the expedition she could, and Polly Dalton joyfully supplied her place with Anna.

These matters, as Mr. Bently foretold, by employing her mind in such acceptable exercises of generosity, though she could not but remember,

Such things were and were most dear,

lessened her attention to the fatal disappointment
of

of her heart. She wrote, as I have said to Mr. Mansel, an account of her then situation, which letter being sent while that gentleman was in town, could not be received by him till his return home; her thanks for the seasonable supply, to which she attributed the saving her life, astonished him; and the account of her leaving Dalton, her subsequent illness and distress, affected him so much, that now he knew where to find her he resolved on a second journey to London; when he arrived at Mrs. Clarke's, her religion having by the late discovery, in which, as she foretold, she had borne an active part, been increased in its fervor, she was gone to the tabernacle with her daughter; but a servant girl, they, at Anna's desire, had hired, could easily give directions to one, who was the continual theme of her mistress's conversation.

Eager to see the dear girl he so intirely loved, his tired horse was again mounted; it was then near nine o'clock, and it was past eleven when he reached the hill.

Mrs. Wellers had that evening been enjoying the triumph of truth, by carrying Anna in Mr. Bently's new coach round the several houses in the village, on pretence of returning visits; which, to own the truth, as she was pretty deep in arrears, might else have still remained in account against her politeness. At the worshipful Mr. Strap's, she had the satisfaction of looking Miss Bibbins into the most evident confusion, by asking Anna, if she had not seen that lady before? and her brother the beau, though he so well knew the girl at the parson's to be a courtesan in high life, never beheld any thing so lovely; he was enchanted with her beauty, charmed with her wit, and (but that was aside) captivated with her fortune, which Mrs. Wellers took care to represent large enough. Had Anna been

been sensible of the obligations she was under to those ladies and gentlemen, it is probable she might have been diverted at the strained politeness which was intended to cover both envy and shame; but as, during the time she resided at Layton, her observations had been confined by her anxiety, and perfectly innocent in all her thoughts and actions, it was impossible she could suspect people she actually did not know, could find a subject either for envy, or detraction in her; Mrs. Wellers, however, enjoyed it, and was diverting her husband with the description, when Mr. Mansel's ring at so late an hour alarmed them.

A servant announced a gentleman inquiring for Miss Mansel, and before they had time for conjecture he was in the room, and Anna at his feet, from whence he fondly raised her, and pressing her to his paternal bosom, felt himself, and afforded Mr. and Mrs. Wellers unutterable pleasure.

At length the voluptuous silence gave way to mutual and kind inquiries after each other's health; Mrs. Wellers soon understood this was the respectable clergyman of whom Anna spoke with such an affectionate warmth; her reception of a guest so welcome to her friend, was no less friendly than polite; she would not suffer them to enter into recitals of the past, that night; Mr. Mansel would want rest, and she was sure Anna's would be intirely broke, if they began a repetition of old grievances; to-morrow would be quite time enough.

Early however, in the morning they met. Mr. Mansel's remonstrances at her unkindness in not returning to him, accompanied every painful event she then related; his surprize at her account of the note, could only be equalled by hers, at his disclaiming that, or any other knowledge of her situation,

situation, than what Wilkinfon learnt from that village; the conjecture fell on Edwin, as they rightly concluded no other person would chuse to part with their money without, at least, having the credit of it; Mr. Mansel very pathetically lamented the depravity of that young man, as it would, he knew, give great uneasiness to his worthy parents, and indeed all his family; here was an opportunity to hear the particulars of Herbert's death, Anna could neither avail herself of, nor resist; she could only stammer out the name of Herbert; they were, he said, as well as their late calamity would admit; and observing the change in her countenance, which he supposed was occasioned by the fatal catastrophe of Mr. Herbert, hastily changed the subject to that of her quitting the Edwins; he told her he had resolved not to return without her, and to take Melmoth lodge in their way, in order to know on what pretence her character had been so infamously aspersed; that now her affairs wore so much more pleasing an aspect, it was still more necessary to clear her fame, and as she thought it proper to wait her uncle's return, he would himself undertake that matter.

C H A P. LXXV.

A new Discovery.

WHILE they were conversing with the real satisfaction which ever attends the meeting of true friends, a very loud ring occasioned Anna to look towards the gate, when she was in the utmost astonishment to see a post coach and four, with a numerous suit of attendants, in Sir William Edwin's livery.

Mrs. Wellers and the whole family were in a bustle, while Anna looked with silent curiosity to see who would alight from the well-known carriage ; her own ideas being, that it was some new contrivance of Mr. Edwin ; but she was convinced of her mistake by the sight of her uncle, handing out Lady Edwin ; she was considering what particular end this visit was to answer ; and when they entered the room, Anna ran to her uncle, who instantly presented her to Lady Cecilia as her niece ; unable to account for so unexpected an act, she looked almost incredulous. Well, my dearest girl, said that lady, embracing her, may you doubt what you hear, unkind and unjust as I have been to the child of my only brother ! but my love, by a natural instinct was drawn to you, and when every art was tried to change my sentiments, still the impulse of my nature was strongly in your favour ; and my pride will be gratified, in resigning your estate to one, who promises so well to support the honour of our family.

Ah,

Ah, madam, answered she, if this be true, if it is no allusion of my senses, if indeed I have the honour of being related to you, talk not of making your acknowledgment to me, by any kind of resignation; I shall be sufficiently rich in your love, and happy in your protection! My ever honoured patroness, she continued, throwing herself at her feet, permit me to add to, but never believe me capable of taking from your enjoyments of any kind.

Oh, Mr. Mordant, cried lady Edwin, how could I ever suffer my judgment to be so imposed on by the prejudices of wicked inventions, against this amiable creature! Rise, my love, said she to Anna, this posture ill becomes Lady Anna Trevanion; your dear father, at the time he breathed his last at a paltry lodging, was actually Earl of Trevanion, with nothing wanting but his own claim to put him in possession of his family estate; it is indisputably now your's; you will not receive your right with half the pleasure with which I shall resign it; the house of Trevanion is rich in all its branches; my fortune is large enough to answer amply every claim of my children; there is the copy of your grandfather's will, do you retire and peruse it; I have, to prevent your teasing yourself with forms and old legacies, marked the passage which relates to my dear brother; in the mean while I will beg of this lady a dish of chocolate.

Anna obeyed her aunt, leaving Mrs. Wellers not a little pleased with her guests; the passage alluded to, she found as follows:

“ And as, from an unfortunate attachment of my son Hugh Trevanion, and, in consequence of my displeasure thereon, he has withdrawn himself out of my knowledge, and if living, keeps himself concealed from his family, in fear of being again treated with a rigour I condemn myself for; it is my true will and meaning, if my aforesaid son
Hugh

Hugh Trevanion, or his lawful heirs, shall personally appear to make good their claims as heretofore recited, then my estates and all the hereditaments thereunto belonging, shall be immediately relinquished by my daughter aforesaid, her heirs, &c. &c. whether covert or sold ; and that she or they shall be intitled to the sixty thousand pounds before mentioned, together with the mansion-house and estate called Dennis Place, left to my late lady by her mother lady Blanch Dennis ; provided nevertheless, that at whatever time such claims be made, my daughter be indemnified for all rents, fines, and all other monies, the produce of my estate, which she may receive before such claimant shall appear ; and as I write this will with my own hand, without consulting or advising with an attorney of any description, I advise and request my children to follow my example ; and if neither my son Hugh, nor his heirs, should appear to claim my estate within twenty-one years after my death, then I give and bequeath the whole of my estate and fortune before recited to my daughter, &c. &c.

This extract from the old Earl's will, elucidated the remaining mystery of her family, and much more than gratified all her wishes on that head ; she carried with her, on her return into the breakfast room, the watch and rings ; had there needed farther confirmation, those would have been sufficient ; the family arms, which had struck her as resembling the Edwin's, were the Trevanion quarters, and the rings ancient mourning ones of their great grandfather Dennis, and immediately known by lady Edwin ; the hair was her mother's, and the hand-writing unquestionably her father's. Mr. Bently soon after appeared ; he enjoyed the dignity of his young friend with some alloy ; he could not, he said, think of drawing so largely on lady Anna Trevanion for happiness, as he could on his Anna

Manfel; but he could tell her, he would not give her up; he had already entered into league with Mr. Manfel; you cannot, I think, do better, said Mr. Mordant; some necessary forms, notwithstanding the Earl's injunctions, must be gone through; my niece not being of age, she will become a ward of Chancery till that period, and guardians must be appointed for her minority; I have indispensable reasons for returning to Jamaica, and Sir William Edwin thinks they ought not to be chosen out of her own family, so that I think you will be the most unobjectionable to her friends, and the most acceptable to my niece for that office; as far as I am consulted, I shall, I assure you, be very nice for her; few men can deserve, though the instant she is announced heiress to the Earl of Trevanion, many will aspire to her.

A starting tear would now find its way from the downcast eye of the young heiress, while Mr. Bently and Mr. Manfel were acknowledging the high honour conferred on them in the lovely ward intrusted to their care; the latter said he should begin his office, with the journey they had agreed on; begin! my dear sir, answered she; your guardianship, in the most valuable sense, has long been begun, I pray to God I may not live to see it end.

The chocolate removed, Lady Edwin told her she was going to town, from whence she did not mean to return till every step was taken to settle her beyond a possibility of interruption in the possession of her estate; we have concluded, continued she, that some altercations may possibly arise in our own family, not pleasing or necessary, for you to be troubled with; if, therefore, this good lady can make it convenient, and you are happy here, we think you had better continue till you can be properly fixed, either with some of your relations, or in a house of your own.

Mr. Mordant

Mr. Mordant gave it as his decided opinion, she was so near being of age, if some prudent well-bred person could be fixed on, to be both chaperone and companion, her house should be established as soon as possible. The conduct of young Edwin was his private reason for wishing to place her out of that family, and any other proper one was not easily to be found.

Lady Edwin, perhaps for the same reason, did not oppose Mr. Mordant's opinion; it was agreed, he should look out for a house, and Mrs. Wellers kindly offered to spend the winter with her in town; this point settled, they parted, her uncle and aunt to town, the latter leaving her footman to wait on her niece, the former engaging to correspond with Mr. Bently, who would not leave his ward; Mansel set out on his journey to Melmoth Lodge the same day.

In the intermediate time, Mrs. Wellers endeavoured to chase from the thoughtful brow of Anna, the gloom which too often clouded her charming face, by tempting her to make frequent excursions to town, to purchase cloaths, and other appendages requisite to her approaching entrance into the great world.

Mr. Mordant the second day after his departure, sent to request they would give their approbation of a house he had seen in St. James's Square, which, as they were extremely pleased with it, he purchased, and accounted for Lady Edwin's silence, as he said he knew some disagreeable occurrences had happened in the family, which intirely took up her attention, and advised his niece, for the present, to avoid going to Grosvenor Square.

A few weeks passed in preparations for her reception at her own house, and in the mean while the letters which follow were received at Layton.

C H A P. LXXVI.

Correspondents.

“ TO ROBERT BENTLY, ESQ.

“ S I R,

“ I HAVE deferred writing from day to day,
“ expecting to be able to tell you of the formal re-
“ nunciation, Lady Edwin insisted on from her
“ children of the Trevanion estate ; Mr. Edwin,
“ as well as his sister, refusing to gratify her ; in-
“ deed were it not for the lovely Anna, the long-
“ boasted dignity of that antient family would
“ wear a very unfavourable aspect ; Mr. Edwin
“ has, in less than twelve months, run out forty
“ thousand pounds, most part at the gaming-table ;
“ and his lady, I am sorry to say, has not been
“ more careful of her character, than he of his
“ money, and is likewise extravagance and folly it-
“ self. Miss Edwin is removed to her father’s house ;
“ a man, who calls himself a colonel in the Russian
“ service, had publicly addressed her, but finding
“ the sixty thousand pounds, to which the younger
“ child or children were intitled by her mother’s
“ marriage settlement, was on condition only of
“ the Trevanion estate not being claimed, aban-
“ doned his conquest, and has, to her infinite
“ mortification, left the kingdom ; they are now,
“ I believe, concluding a match for her in their
“ own family. Lady Edwin chooses to say little,
“ but

“ but I can perceive she is extremely affected.
 “ Mr. Edwin and his lady are the most fashionable
 “ pair in London. I shall not lose a moment in
 “ my dear niece’s affairs ; her house will be very
 “ soon ready for her reception, as will ours for
 “ us ; it is in the first adjoining street. The damask
 “ you sent is superb, and the glasses esteemed the
 “ most elegant in the kingdom. Lady Edwin,
 “ with her two daughters, passing by this morning,
 “ I asked her to look in ; Mrs. Edwin and Cecilia
 “ followed, but never did astonishment put on so
 “ unamiable an appearance ; the things were only
 “ too rich and too elegant for a Duchess ; when I told
 “ them of your presents, they set you down as the
 “ intended lover of the young heiress, and un-
 “ graciously flounced off.

“ So you see, Sir, if there had been a possibility
 “ of disputing my niece’s right, it would have
 “ been done. How lucky it is the discovery was
 “ made in Lady Edwin’s life-time.

“ I trouble you, Sir, with my best affections
 “ to my dear niece, and compliments to Mrs.
 “ Wellers.

“ Yours, &c. &c.

“ J. MORDANT.”

“ TO LADY ANNA TREVANION.

“ MY DEAREST WARD,

“ THE eager desire of vindicating your charac-
 “ ter, carried me, insensible of fatigue, to Mel-
 “ moth Lodge on the eve of the second day after I
 “ departed with you ; but on entering the ave-
 “ nue, I was struck by the entire change of the
 “ appearance

“ appearance of every thing about the house ; the
“ grass was growing over the court yard ; the locks
“ of the gate so rusty, that it was impossible to
“ open them for the admission of my chaise ; a
“ clean old woman informed me, the squire was
“ abroad with his lady and family ; where he had
“ been five years ; I then returned to the inn,
“ very much regretting the impetuosity of my na-
“ ture, which the efforts of reason have not yet
“ been able to correct ; for had it not been for that
“ characteristic of our country, I might have learnt,
“ by inquiring in London, a journey here would
“ be fruitless ; however, as I have the opportunity
“ of the post to write, what a sudden attack of the
“ gout will for some days, at least, put it out of
“ my power to tell you of the family in which you
“ spent your early years, I make use of it.

“ The landlady of the inn, where I now am, im-
“ mediately recollected me, and informed me her
“ name is Steward ; that she lived first nursery
“ maid to you, and after in the same capacity to
“ Mrs. Melmoth’s children ; she perfectly remem-
“ bered your departure from the Lodge, and said
“ some disputes occasioned Colonel Gorget to leave
“ it the same evening, and very soon the French
“ governess was likewise discharged ; she said that
“ Mrs. Melmoth’s best point and Mechlin ruffles
“ being missed immediately after your departure,
“ Madmf. Frajan had the address to persuade Mrs.
“ Melmoth you was the thief, and Mrs. Ashby’s
“ family not only credited but patronized her at
“ the desire of the Colonel ; that the squire never
“ would believe it, though, as he was at that time
“ trying to reconcile himself to the Colonel, he did
“ not publicly say so at first, but finding him not
“ again to be won to his interest, he made no scrup-
“ ple of charging him with meanly plotting with
“ the French woman to ruin an innocent girl, and
“ that

“ that soon after he sold off all his stock here, put
 “ the estate to nurse, and retired to France, or some
 “ foreign country ; for her part, being engaged to
 “ her present husband, where, as coachman to Mr.
 “ Melmoth they chose to have a being of their own,
 “ and have kept this little inn since that time. She
 “ says Mrs. Melmoth’s family is increased since
 “ they have been abroad. When I told this good
 “ creature, which in the pride of my heart I did,
 “ your present situation, she was joyful indeed.
 “ You, my dear Anna, (you have commanded
 “ me still to address you by this epithet,) will not, I
 “ trust, be the only person who feels happiness
 “ at such a chain of providential discoveries. I
 “ pray to God, I may not in mine forget, what as
 “ a servant of the most high, becomes my dear
 “ child, your affectionate,

“ and devoted,

“ DAVID MANSEL.”

These letters were followed by one from Lady Edwin, which I likewise transcribe.

“ MY DEAR NIECE,

“ MY silence, and not seeing you at your good
 “ Mrs. Wellers’, must, I fear, have given you rea-
 “ son to doubt the warm affection I am proud of
 “ bearing you ; my family, my dear, is wholly
 “ divided ; no unity, no peace, and less affection
 “ subsists among us. My son, who is endowed
 “ with talents to render him an ornament to his
 “ country, devotes his fortune to sharpeners, and his
 “ inclinations

“ inclinations to the most abandoned part of the
“ creation.

“ Mrs. Edwin, if she has preserved her honour,
“ has been so exceedingly careless of her reputa-
“ tion, that she has no admittance in the circles
“ where I can have a chance of seeing her; and
“ she has not thought it necessary to pay me more
“ than one visit.

“ Cecilia; oh, Anna! I must say nothing of her;
“ had it not been discovered, that the independency
“ my settlement gave her, in case you had been so
“ happily in existence, was now of no effect, she
“ would have been by this time wife to an Irish
“ fortune hunter, of neither birth, family, or cha-
“ racter. He was introduced by a person who,
“ they say, is a foreign nobleman, but whose choice
“ of an associate renders his own character doubt-
“ ful; we have removed her from her brother's,
“ but we have so little weight with, or authority
“ over her, that as we could not prevail on her to
“ pay you proper respect, and we chose not to
“ trust her out of our own protection, we could
“ not, with propriety, give you the invitation we
“ longed to do.

“ Mr. Mordant is indefatigable about your
“ house; my sister Herbert, and her meek Patty,
“ will soon be in town; to her, and her only, dare
“ I now consign my daughter. The counsel go on
“ with your affairs, as they say, very fast; but
“ their expedition does not keep pace with my
“ wishes; I long to see you in possession of your
“ right, and your uncle declares, he has a capital
“ of thirty thousand pounds to pay you.

“ Receive my congratulations, my dear, and
“ be assured, I am thankful to heaven that the ho-
“ nour and virtues of my ancestors are adorned by
“ such a representative. Sir William joins in
“ every

“ every kind remembrance. Your affectionate
 “ Aunt,

“ CECILIA EDWIN.”

By this letter Anna was informed of the sentiments of the young Edwins towards her, and as she had no wish to exult at Cecilia's expence on the change of her fortune, she coincided with her Aunt's opinion, that it was most eligible to stay where she was, till her own house was ready.

Mean while the preparations for her splendid *entrée* into life filled the village with its lustre ; but the case was now different ; that affected look of modesty, which was so visibly a mark of the undaunted front of immorality, was changed into the sweetest delicacy ; her face which astonished the women how any man could like, became the beautiful index of an accomplished mind ; and those ladies whose misfortune it was they could not walk without having their delicacy shocked by the sight of a young woman, (who, if she had been all their candour suspected, certainly wilfully offended nobody,) now had a sufficient cause for exultation if they passed in the way of the slightest civility from lady Anna Trevanion.

Alike amiable in prosperity or adversity, was our heroine ; but grievous as the observation is, it is nevertheless true, with the same sentiment, person and manners, she, who was in poverty and dependence, charged with almost every vice, and unfit for society, became an example to the women and the admiration of the men.

Mr. Mordant having compleated her house, and prepared every thing for her reception, came down in her own coach, with the heiress's lozenge, to fetch her ; before they left the hill, he desired to have some private conversation with his niece.

C H A P. LXXVII.

The British Merchant.

WHEN Mr. Mordant and Anna were alone, he expressed his happiness of having his wishes accomplished, in leaving her in possession of her right ; I have, my dear, said he, a large sum to account with you for ; and perceiving in the countenance of his niece, ever strongly expressive of the emotions of her mind, a repugnance to hear of her having any claims on him, affectionately putting his hand on her mouth, “ I must stop, my dear,” said he, “ those effusions of a noble heart ; although not a Trevanion, I am a proud Briton ; Lady Cecilia Edwin cannot be more anxious to preserve the honour of her noble blood, more tenacious of its dignity, or value it higher, than I do the title of a British Merchant. Inflexible integrity, industry without parsimony, hospitality without extravagance, a noble confidence in the spirit of commerce, and above all, rectitude of heart and probity in dealings, are the marks which always should, and in general do, distinguish our respectable body.

“ You, Lady Anna, are nobly descended on your father’s side ; your mother’s will not disgrace you ; you must not affront a merchant by interrupting him in an act of common honesty ; the money is your just right ; I am too rich and too proud to accept the property of another ; the uprightness of my dealings have rendered them prosperous. My son.”——he paused—and looking in the blushing face

face of Anna, —“ I see you anticipate what I am going to say, but it is necessary you should know why he has left the kingdom without seeing you.”

“ Good heavens, is my cousin then gone !” exclaimed Anna.

Mr. Mordant proceeded—“ when first at Sir William Edwin’s, his young and guileless heart became enamoured of you, and made proposals to marry and take you to Jamaica with him, he but made use of the privilege he received from me, to chuse for himself previous to his leaving England ; I laid no restrictions on him, but with respect to the character and education of the object of his choice ; my correspondent here had indeed directions to be particular on that head ; but in point of settlement, I gave them their own latitude according to the merit of the lady. Rejected by you on his return home, when I met him at the Madeiras, I found his heart still oppressed with the weight of his first disappointment ; fondly anxious for his happiness, and hearing the dependent situation of the person he loved, I flattered myself, I might yet prevail on her to consent to the happiness of a youth, who, in my partial eye, deserved every thing ; it was long since I had embraced my boy ; and as I could not prevail upon myself to part with him so soon as the different voyages we were engaged in required, I brought him back, fully determined to omit nothing on my part that could contribute to his peace.

“ The discovery of your rank was a fatal blow to our plan ; sanguine, as youth generally are, he foolishly flattered himself with the contrary ; he hoped—but why do I repeat what was an insult on the character of his father—which nothing but the violence of his passion and want of experience can palliate or excuse ; his attachment, his love, increasing too rapidly for prudence or reason to guide,
I have

I have sent him away ; I felt his sorrow—but time will meliorate the transports of youth and passion, and he will yet thank his father for not taking the advantage of—situation, to be a villain.”

The admiration of Anna equalled her gratitude ! those sentiments so nobly consistent with the character he had before drawn, and those actions of probity and honour, filled her with painful pleasure, which deprived her of speech—he went on——

“ If, when his offers were of importance to your subsistence, you could with firmness reject them, was it likely they should now be accepted ? Yes, Anna, dear amiable girl, image of thy beloved mother, I know thy soul ; a false sense of honour, the sacred impulse of gratitude, would have induced you to give happiness, when, for want of a parity of inclination, you could not have received it ; I should have been disgraced in my son’s advancement, and miserable in the reproaches of my own heart.

“ Pardon me, Anna, for thus affecting you ; some apology for your cousin was necessary, and none so proper for the occasion, or so agreeable to my principles as truth ; you have now my indispensable reasons for returning soon to Jamaica, although my ultimate wish is to settle in my native country ; but the time when, depends on two things—my son’s peace—and your marriage. Perhaps, said he, smiling, that consideration may be of some service to the happy man of your choice, whose being so, will be to me his highest recommendation.

“ Mr. Bently is your warm friend ; he is the noblest work of heaven, an honest man ; consult him on points of judgment, and let your aunt be your guide in point of family ; her pride has a laudable foundation. It is necessary for the good of the commonwealth that subordination should be kept up ; there may be some exceptions ; but there

is in general that in noble blood which commands respect, and those marriages are most happy that are nearest equality. As to wealth, you have enough for both ;” and then tenderly embracing her, he left her to prepare for their little journey.

Mrs. Wellers, on entering, found Anna in tears, and inquired with great anxiety the cause, which our heroine repeated with a mixture of delight and affection ; and both ladies did ample justice to the principle of the British Merchant.

C H A P. LXXVIII.

A Fashionable Entrée.

THE time was now arrived when Anna was to be introduced into what is called life ; sensible, accomplished, beautiful, rich and nobly born, was it possible she could be less than the rage ? Her jewels were superb, her house elegant, equipage splendid, and furniture in the highest taste ; in her domestic establishment, happiness and decorum were more consulted than shew or grandeur, although there appeared no deficiency in the latter. Mrs. Wellers was so obliging as to make her home with her ; Mrs. Clarke was her housekeeper, whose daughter she permitted to live as assistant to her mother ; Polly Dalton was her woman, and her other domestics were sober and orderly.

Sir William and Lady Edwin went to her house the moment she arrived ; his honest disinterested soul felt not a thought of displeasure towards Anna ;
though

though we will not pretend to say he would not have been as well pleased to have retained the acres; he, as I have said, fondly loved his children; notwithstanding his dissipation, he gloried in his son; that young man was a phænomenon; he had made a speech against the minister the day before, that lasted two hours and a half, in which he displayed such a knowledge of the constitutional law, such intelligent wisdom, and such sound judgment, as astonished the house, though he had not been in bed two nights before; could the faults of such a son be remembered by such a father? no, it was for him and him only, he regretted the Trevanion estate, and more liberally than ever supplied his extravagance.

The Thursday following, Lady Anna was introduced at court by Lady Edwin; and here, though superior to the sheepishness, which little minds often mistake for modesty, she felt herself awed and abashed; and at the instant the queen entered the circle, her trembling limbs at first refused their office.

But when she ventured to look up, when she met the mild and gracious eye of the best, as well as first of women; when the benevolence which shot its beams from her countenance reassured her, she was sensible only to those feelings a loyal heart, and none but such can describe.—Who, indeed, ever felt in that august presence, but that respect and awe were blended with love and admiration?

And here only it was that her grace, beauty, and modesty, could be eclipsed.

Pride of the British nation, beauteous blossom of a court, by your presence rendered the brightest in the known world, into whatever clime, by the policy of nations, ye are transplanted, if the blessings and prayers of a people, whose rising hopes
ye

ye are, be answered, you will experience the peace and prosperity so sacredly promised to the children of the righteous, and so amply merited by the graces of your own lovely forms, and the innate virtues of your souls! yet will the tears of sensibility drop over the unavoidable separation, and regret follow the parting steps of the children of our beloved sovereign.

The buz of, "who is that charming creature! what is she!" together with some Anecdotes of Anna's history that had transpired, rendered her person, dress, words, and even looks, objects of curiosity and attention; her beauty became the topic of conversation among the men, as her dress did among the women. Compliments and congratulations flowed from every tongue; and the eye of Majesty glistened at the sight of a young orphan, thus restored to the dignity of her blood.

Her doors were thronged with visitors, and her porter's roll was too voluminous for her own inspection. She appeared at the Opera: she had been seen there before, when a few of the ornaments of Fop's alley had bestowed from their dear selves so much attention as to swear, she was a devilish fine girl, a good piece, a charming creature;—they had done more, they had even asked who she was? but that was the last stretch of expiring curiosity; a poor Welch parson's daughter, a companion to an old woman! horrid, contemptible, how could the pretty things be drawn in to bestow a moment on such an object? She attended Lady Edwin to that seat of elegance over and over after, without exciting a single glance; in this neglect, indeed, she had the comfort of seeing almost every fine woman included, those of a certain description only excepted; the beaux of the present age are not very famous for their attention

tion to modest women, or indeed, any women at all.

Now her entrance into her box was honoured by the general notice of the audience; the men all lost their hearts, and the ladies were most of them her very dear friends; in fine, the lovely young heiress was the fashion.

But in those scenes of show, pleasure, and ceremony, which daily increased in their demands on her time, she neglected not her friends, nor were the claims of distress forgot; the first part of the day, she said, was her own, the remainder the world's; and her real ideas of the duties of humanity, and the calls of the unfortunate on her affluence and power, were too potent to suffer mere form or dissipation to deprive her of the secret approbation of her own heart.

In spite of whatever taste, fashion, and example could urge, though an enthusiast in music, Anna preferred weeping with Siddons, or smiling with Abington, to the hearing a monster made by avarice and inhumanity trill out woes, it was impossible it could have a natural idea of.

Another very unfashionable and ridiculous custom she obstinately adhered to, which was that of satisfying her mind with one entertainment in one evening, and returning home when it was ended. Dancing was her favourite diversion, and might perhaps sometimes have carried her to the midnight hour, had her spirits been such as would suffer her to partake of it.

Mr. Mansel returned from Somersetshire, after a month's confinement, but was not suffered by Lady Anna to go to Wales; in the summer she promised to pay her last respect to the remains of her dear friend at Llandore, to whose memory she caused a black marble monument to be erected over
the

the spot where her beloved governess was buried; she had likewise made strict, but fruitless enquiry, for the place where the body of her father had been interred, and given orders to erect a magnificent mausoleum at Trevanion chapel, in commemoration of his death and misfortunes; she made Mr. Mansel her domestic chaplain, and the guide of her actions; her uncle and Mr. Bently had a house between them; the latter growing more attached to our heroine the longer he knew her; he was her almoner and her partner in every charitable donation.

Lady Edwin was her constant visitor, and so good as to excuse her punctual return, on account of Cecilia, whose rancour was out of all bounds; Mr. and Mrs. Edwin seldom came in her way, as her intercourse was wholly among the amiable of one sex, and the moral of the other.

C H A P. LXXIX.

Proves that Riches will not do every Thing.

ANNA's town establishment being compleated, the many offers of marriage, which were rejected as soon as made, served only to convince her of the wedded state of her heart, which no change in life was able to wean from its first dear object; his death, of which she entertained no doubt, fixed her resolutions as to matrimony.

While

While Herbert lived, she had not presumed to indulge a hope of being united to him, though she flattered herself she might cherish in her secret thoughts the unconquerable affection she bore him, without injury to the happy woman who was destined to share his heart and bear his name. All he said, or did, was, in her partial eye, the standard of perfection; with him imagination rested, and with him hope died, and still her hours of retirement were devoted to the fond remembrance of some or other of the scenes she had passed in his society; she was amusing herself in a melancholy revival of past happiness, when Mrs. and Miss Herbert were announced.

Agitated by her own hopeless thoughts, her face pale as death, with the deplorable impressions of grief and despair on her mind, she very much disappointed those ladies, who expected to see the change in her fortune marked by the life and gaiety of her deportment.

Patty took her passive hand, and congratulated her on the happy discovery of her rank; Mrs. Herbert said all that true benevolence could dictate on the state of her affairs; the sable hue of their dress went to the soul of Anna; it was some moments before her sensations would suffer her to articulate, and even then the power of speech was preceded by a shower of tears; when this was subsided, she returned, in the most graceful and endearing manner, the civilities of her friends, recollected the past goodness of Mrs. Herbert with grateful acknowledgments, and her heart reclaimed its alliance with Patty; she ordered herself to be denied to every body, and enjoyed, in the unrestrained society of her old friends, the real advantage of wealth and independence; she blamed herself for not writing to them; but yet, said she, in a trembling voice, not able with all her efforts

forts to restrain her tears as she glanced her charming eyes over their mourning—what could I say.

Mrs. Herbert, much calmer in her grief than Anna expected, answered only by a deep sigh at this hint; and Patty's eyes filled, but, as if glad to be relieved from this painful subject, made no answer and the conversation stopped, till resumed by Mrs. Herbert's apologizing, in her turn, for her silence, by assuring her, however unaccountable it might seem, Lady Edwin, when she informed them of her brother's heir being found, dropped no hint it was their dear Anna.

“And Mr. Wilkinson,” interrupted Patty with glowing cheeks, “does not know it yet.” They then began to talk of Llandore; Mrs. Herbert spoke highly of Mr. Wilkinson, and expressed herself under great obligations to the goodness of his heart; his praises were re-echoed by Patty, with a warmth both of speech and colour Anna could not help observing.

Mrs. Herbert declined staying the evening, having engaged to return to Grosvenor-Square early; but she permitted her daughter to stay, as they were to quit town very soon, and the young ladies were anxious to pass as much time as their engagements would allow together.

When alone, those amiable women again embraced, and unbosomed themselves to each other.

Patty accounted for the manner in which Anna had been discarded from Grosvenor Square, and how her note had fallen into Miss Edwin's hand, whose unkindness to Anna was but the counterpart of what she had herself experienced from her; she however hoped, when they were married, her brother would have influence enough to induce her to leave her London manners behind her,

her, when they went to Wales. She was proceeding—

“Your brother!” said Anna, with every mark of astonishment, “is your brother then alive?”

“Alive!” answered Patty, smiling, “why what can possibly induce you to ask? yes, thank God.”

“For whom then,” said Anna, “do you wear such deep mourning?”

“Oh,” returned Miss Herbert, “I have not yet told you half the sorrows we have known since I saw you; my poor papa—but I must tell you all, and how charmingly your old lover Wilkinson has behaved to us.” She then, in her ingenuous, artless manner, related the arrest of her father, the accident to Tyrrel, Collet’s good nature, and Charles’s exile.

The agitation, the hopes, fears, and expectations of our heroine, during this relation, cannot be described; but her mind was in the end settled with respect to young Herbert, by the conclusion of the narrative.

“When,” Patty said, “my aunt found her brother’s lawful heir appeared, she wrote to mamma, and I believe, if the truth was known, communicated some imprudent conduct of my cousin’s, but at the same time told her, Cecilia still avowed her partiality for my brother, and therefore, as she would yet be a great fortune, which my aunt dreaded might subject her to the designs of bad people; and as so great a dismemberment of the estate, would prevent Sir William providing for Charles in the manner he had proposed, she conjured mamma to forward the marriage they always intended should take place, which, with great reluctance, she undertook; what passed between her and my
“brother,

“ brother, I can’t tell ; but he has agreed to oblige
“ her, and we are come to town to meet him.
“ We go to Dennis Place *en famille* ; they pro-
“ posed the wedding to be celebrated immediately
“ on our arrival there.”

This conclusion gave Anna a flow of false spirits ; her pride assisted her to conceal from the sister her fond, and as she then esteemed it, weak attachment to the brother ; her exertions to entertain her friend the remainder of the evening were uncommonly vivacious ; and strength of mind did that for her, art never could ; it gave her the appearance of ease, when her heart was bursting.

Patty regretted very much, decency would oblige her to return with the hymeneal party to Dennis Place ; she promised to be a punctual correspondent, and pay a visit to Anna as soon as she could get off ; Mr. Mordant attended her home, and returned with the news of Mr. Herbert’s arrival in Grosvenor Square.

Mr. Mansel, who was present, saw all his former suspicions of Anna’s attachment to young Herbert confirmed in her truth-speaking countenance at this information, but suffered not a thought to escape him ; she presently retired to her apartment, and, dismissing her woman, threw herself, almost suffocated with grief, and gasping for breath, on the sofa.

“ Alive ! is then Charles Herbert alive ! does he then yet exist ? and can it be ? restored from death, he lives, indeed, but to what end ? and is he at last to marry Miss Edwin ?—poor young man ! had he not been happier wedded to his grave ?—then pausing—not his own choice neither—that might have led him—but gratitude—Oh, what a substitute for love ! how indelicate the mind that can accept it !—how ill paired will theirs be ? yet, why do I
say

say so ! what right have I to suppose their attachment is not mutual ? would he else have entered with such alacrity into their scheme ! Ah ! no—why then do I suffer a hopeless, unrequited passion thus to afflict me, to embitter my moments, and render me wretched in the midst of enjoyments ? Oh, why does memory, too faithful to my sorrows, for ever remind me of his perfections ? but I have long resolved never to marry ; and will it be a greater crime to love, to adore him, when I have it so amply in my power to serve, than when poor and destitute, I had but my prayers to give him ? let me hope not—let him then marry Cecilia ; his children will, perhaps, inherit my estate ; I will, at all events, be a sister, a faithful friend to him.” With those ideas, she flattered herself she had composed her mind : but sleep again forsook her, and her sunk eyes shewed her attentive and watchful friends how ill she had rested.

Anxious to fly from herself, when the newspaper, in which were announced the arrivals at Bath, was brought her, a sudden hope, by change of place, to procure the tranquillity she could not expect, where the Edwins, and their concerns, must come to her ears, she proposed an excursion to Bath ;—she was sick of London—Would Mrs. Wellers go ?—“ Hey day,” cried Mr. Bently, “ and pray what is there in London to sicken your whimsical Ladyship you will not find in Bath ? ” “ Well,” answered she, affecting gaiety, “ I am determined to try your gallantry ; what do I keep so many old men in my train for, but to exhibit their folly in following me ; uncle, will you go ? ”

“ Are you serious ? ” he answered.

She assured him she was ; and Mrs. Wellers declaring it was the only scheme in the world she should

should like, if it was agreeable to Mr. Wellers, he was consulted, and every thing settled for an excursion to Bath.

C H A P. LXXX.

The Journey postponed.

ANNA, always quick in her ideas, and rapid in putting into execution resolutions once formed, and willing to avoid Mr. Herbert and Cecilia, they were on the point of setting out for Bath, when a messenger came to beg Lady Anna's presence in Grosvenor Square.

She had several times been at Lady Edwin's public and private parties; in the first, Miss Edwin did not at present appear, and in the last she had not even chose to mix; but the hurry of this summons alarmed her, which alarm was increased by Mr. Mordant's servant bringing the news of a duel, and intrigue, which, though no names were mentioned, plainly pointed at young Edwin, and his Lady. The carriages, which were drawing up at the instant Lady Edwin's servant arrived, were now ordered to put up, as the journey must be unavoidably postponed, at least a few hours, and Anna went in her's to Grosvenor Square.

She alighted; the servant was followed by Mr. Herbert; but oh, how changed! his fine face, where light-hearted joy was wont to dwell, overspread with grief, and wan with care, his
eyes,

eyes yet charming, retreated from her earnest and enquiring look: deep sighs rent his bosom: his hand trembled almost to convulsion as he led her, still turning from her his averted eyes, to lady Edwin's dressing-room, where a scene presented itself, which beggars all description.

Mrs. Edwin, in a gay masquerade habit, pale as ashes, and weeping, was leaning on Cecilia; Lady Edwin, on a sofa, just recovered from an hysterical fit; Mrs. Herbert vainly endeavouring to comfort them. The moment Lady Anna entered the room, they all seemed to feel their grief renewed.

Oh, Anna! said Lady Edwin, my son, my dear Hugh, is no more! and what is worse, he has imbrued his hands in blood: he is not only murdered, but is himself a murderer!

Anna shuddered at this dreadful account given in broken intervals of grief, amid the groans of the whole family; she could administer no consolation; her spirits low when she left the house, and weakened at the sight of Herbert, were now too much overpowered to be supported; she fainted away.

On her recovery, she found Mrs. Herbert and Patty, were only remaining of the distressed group, she saw on her first coming; her eyes vainly explored the room; the object in which they delighted was no longer seen; she could hardly believe but what had passed was an illusion of her senses, that she had not seen Herbert at all.

Mrs. Herbert, as she recovered, informed her of the fatal event which so distressed them; she said Mrs. Edwin drove her there about nine, habited as she had seen, and in a state of terror and distress bordering on distraction, she told them she
went

went last night in a party to the Hay-market, and by some accident missed the lady who was her companion, but supposing she could not fail of meeting her again, she danced with a gentleman, Count Maxwell, who was of their party, till daylight; not, however, meeting again her friend, and the rooms being clearing, they went to the house of the lady they had lost; finding, to their surprize, she was not come home, they agreed to have some coffee, and wait her return; but tired and fatigued, they had both dropped asleep, from which they were awoke by company gaily running into the room, who, when unmasked, they found to be Mr. Edwin and her friend Mrs. Corbet; high words ensued between the gentlemen, who went out, regardless of her prayers and cries, to decide the matter; the servants said, they got into the coach which brought Mr. Edwin and Mrs. Corbet home, and ordered it to Hyde Park, whither Sir William immediately ran, where he heard the gentleman in the white domino, who Mrs. Edwin affirmed to be her husband, was killed on the spot, and the other said to be mortally wounded; but, Mrs. Herbert added, this dreadful catastrophe was rendered somewhat doubtful, by a messenger from Mr. Edwin's, informing Lady Edwin, it was the Count that was killed, and that Mr. Edwin was alive; the distracted parents were gone there attended by her son.

On hearing that the Count was no more, Mrs. Edwin was fallen into strong convulsions, and was carried senseless to Cecilia's apartment.

Such a complicated scene of distress, could not fail to shock the gentle soul of Anna; sensibly affected by the voice of woe, wherever it met her, it here had the double claims of blood and friendship; yet her own heart, torn with conflicting passions, she was badly qualified for the office of

comforter to others. When the news of her son's misfortune reached Lady Edwin from her own daughter's hard heart, she had small hope of consolation; the bosom friend of a woman, whose conduct, allowing her story to be a real recital of facts, had blameably involved her husband in a duel, how could she open her heart, or unveil her suspicions to her.

Next to her in point of affection, and far higher in esteem, stood our heroine; when unexpected calamities strike the soul, it wishes to look out of the poignancy of its feelings to the resources of friendship, and dreadful is the situation of that being who looks in vain. Mrs. Herbert, indeed, was present; but Mrs. Herbert's misfortune and dependence took from her the weight she would else have had; Lady Edwin, therefore, in her first agonies, sent for Anna, although she regretted that hasty step, when she saw her so affected.

The instant after a message coming from Portman Square, she reluctantly left her niece to the care of Mrs. Herbert, Charles attending her; Miss Edwin now running into the room, frightened out of her sullen, supercilious airs, begged Mrs. Herbert's assistance; Mrs. Edwin being, she believed, dying; two gentlemen in the medical line, a physician and apothecary were with her, but a third was necessary; the convulsion had brought on an abortion, without restoring her senses, and she lay a pitiable victim to the consequences of those deviations from honour, she would a few hours before have laughed at.

Mrs. Herbert begged Anna to retire to Lady Edwin's dressing-room, ordering her woman to attend; she was a sensible well behaved person, who had lived there when Anna was Miss Mansel, and took that opportunity of
paying

paying court to her by her assiduity and respect; but Mrs. Herbert had hardly left the room before this attendant was summoned to her Lady at Mr. Edwin's.

Left alone in momentary expectation of something still more alarming, she endeavoured to recollect her scattered thoughts; the wanderers of themselves adverted to one object; notwithstanding the horrors that surrounded her, Herbert was present to her imagination, yet, self-condemned, she was trying at fortitude, when the door suddenly opened, and Herbert hastily entered.

I thought my mother, said he—when seeing Anna alone and in tears, his confusion, his trembling returned; she had asked him twice after Lady Edwin and her son, before she could perceive the least attention to her question, at last he answered with a voice of tenderness:

That the horrors of the morning were such as gentleness like hers should not witness; he entreated she would permit him to wait on her home; Lady Edwin, continued he, is too mournfully engaged to return soon; Mrs. Edwin is unworthy to harass you with her merited distress; let me, dear Lady Anna, then lead you from this scene of sorrow; and, oh, said he, with agitation too strong to be suppressed or concealed, that it had been my blessed fate to have preserved you through life from every ill; to have watched over and protected your beauty and honour. Withdraw not, dearest creature, this hand, perhaps held for the last time, by the most miserable of men; withhold not from me the comfort of unfolding to you the exquisite misery which will most assuredly destroy me.

Anna, hardly less affected than himself, however remembered both their situations.

Engaged to Cecilia, could he dare to approach her with the professions of a passion inimical to her honour; was she not free when he voluntarily submitted to enter into that engagement! yet had he not obliged her to exert her endeavours to tear him from her memory! pride and passion both called on her now in this arduous moment, (when her own heart was melting with tenderness, she saw before her, almost speechless with agony, the first, last, and only object of her love) to be resolute! assuming, therefore, as much composure as ingenuity, like hers, could put on, she said, she should certainly go home, though (haughtily) she would not trouble him for an escort; Miss Edwin had just left the room, in a situation which had a right to all the tenderness he seemed inclined to throw away on her.

Notwithstanding all her endeavours, the moment she uttered this sentence, her pride, her reason, were too weak to support her in a conflict so interesting, her heart again sunk, and her voice was lost in the last sentence.

Herbert, with a bow he meant should conceal his emotions, then let go her hand.

She hastily quitted the apartment, and throwing herself into her carriage, was carried home in a state of mind neither to be conceived nor described; the fatal news had been confirmed in St. James's Square, and Mrs. Wellers, in great uneasiness, waited to see, or hear from Anna.

Her dejected looks, and faint voice, threw Bently into a rage; he wondered what possible end it could answer to send for her to such scenes?

She retired directly accompanied by her friend, in whose bosom she wept without communicating her sorrows; not that she had any objection to unveiling her inmost thoughts to that worthy woman,
but

but the indelicacy of suffering her peace to be broke by a man, who had never made any efforts to obtain her hand, and who was engaged to another, restrained her. Mr. Mansel gently rapped at the door, and was admitted; the good man had long seen, with great pain, all was not at ease in the heart of his child, as he yet called her; he entreated her to unbosom her grief to her friends, and led himself to the subject of young Herbert and his intended marriage.

Soon was Mrs. Wellers convinced that there the malady lay, but she was much surprized at Mr. Mansel's mentioning his marriage with Miss Edwin as an irrevocable engagement, for Collet had always made her the confidant of what passed between him and Herbert, which she had not repeated to Anna, having given the Doctor her honour not to do it, and never hearing Herbert's name mentioned, she little supposed him of consequence to the peace of her friend, whose silent anguish now fully explained the source of her uneasiness; but as she avoided answering their kind interrogatories, and appeared uneasy, they persuaded her to try to take some rest, to which she the more readily consented, as she wished to be free from their well-meant though officious enquiries.

C H A P. LXXXI.

Masquerade Adventure concluded.

THE moment Mrs. Wellers was alone with Mr. Manfel, she revealed all she knew of Herbert's attachment to Anna; he was not only surprized, but grieved, to find, from her account, two such amiable young people, with no other obstruction to their being completely happy, than what mere obedience to the will of others had raised, were likely to be miserable in their separation; he well knew the inflexibility of the Edwins in points in which they conceived their honour to be concerned, and he as well knew the nice value Anna set on propriety and delicacy, those were all against the most distant hope of the long concerted match being set aside; and he foresaw, he said, with youth, beauty, rank, and riches, Lady Anna had not yet gone through all her days of probation; such was the imperfect state of all human bliss, that as the affliction of a corrupted world led often to blessings, so its attainments were as often productive of ills, more painful to the human mind, than any of the train of common events, which daily and hourly visit the poor and laborious part of the creation.

Another messenger from Sir William brought a note, which requiring an answer, they were obliged to risk disturbing their friend.

It was from Lady Edwin, again requesting to see lady Anna, and dated Portman Square; before she

she had read it through, Mrs. Herbert was announced.

Her looks indicated terror and grief; she begged Anna, if it was possible for her to support such a scene, to go with her to Mr. Edwin's; he is dying, said she, but declares he cannot leave the world, without seeing you; his paroxysm from pain has been short, till within this half hour; the mortification is already begun, and he lies free from those agonies which might have affrighted you too much; for God's sake, if you can bear it—come.

Anna wanted no farther intreaties, but Mrs. Wellers insisted on accompanying her there, and Mr. Mansel begged to follow them.

When they arrived at Mr. Edwin's, a dismal silence reigned through the whole house; the hall, which was hitherto filled with ill-governed footmen and their associates, was now wholly deserted; the porter rung a bell, when Bates, with a countenance of grief, ushered them through the magnificent rooms into one in which Lady Edwin sat, with her eyes half shut, in silent agony by the bed's side, holding one hand of her beloved son, Sir William kneeling on the other; drops of sorrow rolling in quick succession down his manly cheeks; Miss Edwin and Patty behind Lady Edwin's chair, against which their faces were both hid; and on the bed, supporting the dying man, and wiping the sweat from off his forehead, sat the elegant, but emaciated form of a lovely woman, whom Anna had never yet seen; two surgeons stood at a distance from the bed, venerating the grief of a virtuous pair, mourning their son cut off in the prime of youth, by the horrible consequences of his own vices.

When Anna approached the solemn scene of woe, Lady Edwin, with a look that went to her soul,

foul, extended to her the hand she had at liberty, and grasping it a moment—unable to speak—at length, looked at the lady who supported Edwin; she understood her, and with a voice choaked with grief said;

The lady is here, your cousin is come; will you not now speak to her! come, my beloved Hugh, ease your dear heart!

He immediately looked up; a faint gleam of satisfaction shone out of his languid eyes, already dim with the approach of death; after a short silence, in which he seemed to be recollecting himself:

Oh, Anna! said he, with a bitter sigh, is it thus after all my plots and schemes I now see thee!—yet, even now, I delight to look on thee! it is a cordial to my departing spirit, that I see thee—innocent, and virtuous; I thank the God of mercy, who protected thee from my arts. Say, Anna, say cousin, can you forgive me? will you pardon the ills you know, and the many you do not know, I had contrived against the purity of an angel? speak to me, and pray for me; the prayers of such a soul must be acceptable!

Anna, whose heart never harboured anger beyond the passing moment, kneeling at the feet of Lady Edwin by the bed-side, solemnly assured him of her perfect forgiveness, and wept her concern at the fatal event; she solemnly promised, at his request, to comfort his parents.

You only, said he, are worthy of the tenderness of such hearts as theirs; be to them what I ought to have been. His sister then caught his eye; Cecilia, he added, take the warning your brother gives you, be virtuous and be happy; feeling now the tears of his supporter drop on his face, oh, Angelina, said he, I have not deserved this tenderness from you, do you forgive me too?

Forgive

Forgive you! Edwin, answered the unhappy woman; do you forgive me? my unbounded love drew you into my own ruin; had I not fallen, you might have been happy.

Protect her, languidly looking at his father; and again at Anna, adieu thou last-cheering object of my thoughts, be in all thy ways blessed; then, as if on recollection, where is your Mr. Mansel?

He is, answered Anna, with a pleased earnestness, in the house, will you see him?

Yes!

She flew out of the room to fetch him, and then he desired to be left by all, but the lady and the clergyman; they complied, each choosing separate apartments, except Cecilia, who was so much shocked at the approach of mortality, she would not be left a moment alone.

A dead silence reigned through the house, which in ten minutes was awfully interrupted by people passing quick in Mr. Edwin's room, and that then again succeeded by a profound silence.

Mr. Mansel soon after entering Lady Edwin's apartment, she knew all was over, and Mrs. Herbert assisted by him, then attending her; Anna and Mrs. Wellers returned home, leaving the body to the care of young Herbert, from which sad remains the lady would not stir.

The wretched Mrs. Mitford was accidentally passing in a hackney coach to her lodgings at Brompton, where she lived, patiently waiting, in a deep decline, the last great change; at the moment the bleeding and expiring Edwin was carried home, resigned to her own fate, and at peace with a merciful God, this sight of a man she had doted on, was too much for her reason; grief and consternation gave her strength; she stopped the coach and flew to him; his eyes, their lustre lost in the approach of death, recognized her injured form;

his head sunk on her bosom, and those feelings of humanity and justice, which his dissipated life had conquered, were now revived; he implored her forgiveness, who in this moment had no other consolation, but that in death, she should not be divided from him, who she had adored when living—she accompanied him home.

This was no time for form or prejudice; the pity Lady Edwin always felt for the unhappy Angelina was not lessened, by seeing her weak efforts to support her dying son; she invited her home, but the forrowing woman declined her kindness, she continued with the corps till it was removed from the house, and in one month her own was, at her last request, deposited with it.

C H A P. LXXXII.

The Retrospect.

MR S. Corbet, who I have already introduced to my readers, was a voluptuary of fashion, left early in life a widow, without a guide or principle to regulate her conduct; and having been unkindly used by her husband, she vowed never to marry again, which vow reached not the exclusion of modern gallantry; in that she had indulged till all the lovely attributes of the sex were destroyed, modesty was no more, and every sense of delicacy lost in the constant gratification of vicious passions; her own person was lovely, and being, from long practice,

practice, perfect mistress of the art of pleasing, her intrigues were numerous, but as the heart had seldom its share in them, they were consequently of short duration.

The day she dined with Mrs. Edwin, in company with her husband, had been fatal to her peace, and the indifference with which he received her advances, while it excited her anger, but increased her inclinations. Mr. Edwin was certainly an object to inspire the soft passion, which was to this lady, in the degree she now felt it, as violent as new; she persevered, though with great difficulty, in her attacks; as he was so much devoted to gaming, little time was left for intrigue, and the grosser appetites were gratified with more ease than gout; as to his serious desires, when his inordinate love of play would suffer them to arise in his mind, they were ever pointed to Anna Mansel.

But Mrs. Corbet was not accustomed to give up a point on which her heart was set; she sent him an anonymous challenge, which no young gay man would refuse with the slightest regard to his reputation; they met, the lady was satisfied; one interview succeeded the other, and Mrs. Corbet's attachment increasing with a rapidity she had no wish to repel, uniting treachery with cunning, she formed the plot of betraying to Mr. Edwin the ill conduct of his wife, in order to effect a separation between them, which would, she flattered herself, secure to her the legal possession of the object on whom she doated.

The fatal masquerade was not the first or only place from whence Mrs. Edwin had retired with the Count. Mrs. Corbet well knew what would happen, and having appointed him to meet her there, set him to watch his wife the whole evening, and at her instigation he had followed them to
her.

her house; there the unhappy pair were surprized, not as Mrs. Edwin said sleeping, but in a situation sufficiently provoking to a husband.

Mrs. Corbet, depending on the contempt she knew Edwin felt for his wife, and unacquainted with, or not allowing for, the passionate warmth of his country, thought the law only would have been his resource; but the dreadful consequence of her deceit to a woman she called friend, and who had indeed been greatly influenced by her example, rendered her truly miserable, in the loss of the man she loved, and that by her own contrivance, and left her in full possession of the contempt and abhorrence of the world for her part in so deep a tragedy.

Her house, from being thronged with a certain description of people, who not having absolutely found out, pretended to some degree of reputation, became deserted; and her fortune being too small to support it without some such assistance, she had often received from Mrs. Edwin, she flew, loaded with ignominy and shame, a burthen to herself, and a disgrace to her relations, friends she had none, to the continent, where she finished her life in indigent obscurity.

Mrs. Edwin was so obnoxious to Sir William and Lady Edwin, to whom their unhappy son related all that had happened, they detested her name, and Sir William insisted on her being removed.

Miss Edwin, however, continued her firm advocate. The feelings of that young lady seldom carried her out of her dear self. The death of her brother was very soon reconciled to her ideas; her prospects were considerably enlarged by it, and the addition to her fortune of infinitely more consequence than the loss of fifty brothers.

Charles

Charles Herbert was now the undoubted heir to her father's estate, which was entailed by his grandfather on him, in failure of male issue from Sir William ; her mother's, with all the personals, would be hers. A desire of mixing in the gay scenes she had reluctantly been torn from, returned with the power of enjoying them, when she confessed her affection for Herbert ; it was done with a view of conciliating the favour of her offended parents, whose disgust at the levity and imprudence of her conduct threatened to fix her in a sphere of life she detested. As to the young man, she had once thought him amiable, but that was before her taste was polished by a thorough knowledge of the great world ; before she had been taught to laugh at all sacred engagements. Colonel Mendez had taught her many lessons, besides despising the language of truth ; and fond as she once was of him, no person living could be less to her taste now than Charles Herbert.

But she knew her mother's folly in setting a value on every thing that corresponded with her old-fashioned notions that Sir William would not oppose his lady in any thing ; and that a match with her cousin was always their hobby-horse ; besides, owning a passion for him went a great way towards clearing her from some unpleasant reflections which had been spread concerning her connection with Mendez ; then again she dearly loved mischief, and if not first in Herbert's affections, she should have the satisfaction of rendering his union impossible with her, who was ; since, if he declined the proposal, as she more than expected, he must either stay abroad under the disgrace of his friends, or return to what she knew he would never submit to, a servile dependence on people who conceived themselves ill-used by him.

But

But in those conjectures she was deceived ; for Herbert had left England in such thorough conviction of Anna's imprudence, which, though it had indeed been rendered something doubtful in Collet's first letter, was brought to proof in his second, he had given up every thought of her, but those of regret and compassion.

His father's deplorable end, his increasing obligations to the Edwins, their noble behaviour to his mother and sister, with their parental care of himself, would have drawn from him, at their requisition, his life without a murmur ; when, indeed, Mrs. Herbert first hinted her wish he should marry his cousin, so much he disliked the manners and conduct he had been witness to in that young lady, it appeared to him the much greater sacrifice, and his answer to Mrs. Herbert conveyed a positive rejection of the treaty.

But when his mother, on whom he doted, came to plead to him the kindness of Sir William and Lady Edwin, the destitute and defenceless state she and his sister must be in if deserted by them, the charge of ingratitude it would entail on them all to reject not only the offer but the earnest desire of both the lady and her friends, when she conjured him not to complete the wretchedness of his mother, and assured him all her hope of comfort in this life depended on his obliging her, when she begged him to recal to his idea the many, many years of her past life, in which misery had darkened her days and rest forsook her nights, and implored him not to let her now experience that from the darling of her soul, which would far exceed all she had yet suffered ; and when he considered that the only woman he had yet seen, or indeed hoped to see, with whom his heart claimed alliance, was lost to him, and that for ever, greatly as he disliked Cecilia, he could not prevail on himself to withhold the

the consolation his dear mother demanded, and therefore impowered her to forward the affair, and say any thing she pleased for him, promising to meet her in London as soon as she wished : he likewise wrote to Sir William and Lady Edwin, and to their daughter, in terms consistent with that engagement.

Cecilia had no idea of the matter's being so hastily concluded ; her design being to avert the sentence of living in Wales ; to teaze Herbert, and to amuse herself ; however, as she knew no remedy, and concluded she should be better able to manage him than her parents, thought it best to submit with a grace to what she then saw no hopes of avoiding.

Herbert, by setting out for England, missed Collet's last letter, giving an account of Anna's unexpected good fortune ; and as Lady Edwin had not, in her first perturbation, informed Mrs. Herbert of any of the particulars, only simply, that an heir was found to her brother's estate, it was impossible he could know that heir was Miss Mansel ; what then were his feelings when, at the same moment, he learned her rank and fortune ? He was likewise convinced, she had been injured in every report circulated to her disadvantage.

Too late was justice done her character ; his honour was engaged ; he had signed the contract, the deeds were engrossing ; and if that had not been the case, could he now dare to aspire to a person of her rank, courted and caressed by all the world, followed and admired as much for the beauty and accomplishments every mouth was full of, as for the estate she was heiress to ?

It could not be.

What then did prudence, reason, and honour dictate ? To avoid her sight, to fly from the temptations of gazing on her, and to decline all intercourses, or even knowledge of her affairs ; this was the lesson hard necessity taught, and which he was resolving

resolving to put in practice, when the calamity in Sir William's family rendered an interview unavoidable.

Anna Mansel, young, innocent, and amiable at Llandore, captivated his heart before he was sensible of its danger, at the instant he believed her engaged; his eyes dwelt insensibly on the attractive elegance of her person, his soul hung on the accents of her lips, and his senses were enraptured with the fascinating charms of her conversation; to love her was a part of his nature he could not conquer; unconscious of any design of injury to her, as unapprehensive of danger to himself, he sought not to explore the secret springs of feelings, that were no less new than delightful; it was enough, that to-morrow, and to-morrow, he should see her; she would listen with pleasure while he read a selected passage from a favourite author; she would again sing the song that had yesterday charmed him; if they walked out, he should decorate her bosom, the seat of purity and truth, with a flower of his culling; if they conversed, he was sure to find his own sentiments endeared to his reason by a recollection that they were hers; but no farther thought ruffled the serenity of the present, or alarmed him with the apprehension for the future, till Anna began to absent herself from Llandore, and the day was fixed for her departure.

Then the pangs he felt revealed a secret pregnant with despair and disappointment; her circumstances so narrow, his own so dependant, his parents forming such hopes from his advancement in life, how could he dispense with the duty he owed them or answer to his own honour, any attempt to seduce the affections of an amiable young creature, from the person to whom he understood she was engaged.

We have seen the progress of his affection after their interview in London, which could not now increase, and which had not suffered abatement.

C H A P.

C H A P. LXXXIII.

Old Habits soon resume.

MRS. Edwin's guardian refusing to receive her, she was, for the present, removed to lodgings ; and Mr. Edwin sent down in great state to the family vault for interment, attended by Herbert, who carried with him Sir William's recommendations to be returned for the borough in the room of his deceased father.

Lady Edwin, whose soul, though it felt, sunk not under woes which are the common lot of mankind, lamented more the degeneracy of her son than his death ; constitutionally attached to the dignity of her family, she considered his early fate, though it wrung all the mother in her soul, as a period to the immorality and extravagance of his actions ; such a life reflected disgrace on the blood of the Trevanions ; had it been continued, the estate as well as name, as far as it depended on him, the one must have been branded with dishonour, the other divided among sharpers.

Anna was now literally the pride and hope of her aunt, in her she delighted, and with her she chiefly spent her time ; for as to her daughter, she had a settled ill opinion of her principles ; to deviate from the truth was in Lady Edwin's estimation, a prognostic of the worst kind ; and Miss Edwin minded not confirming such deviations with the most solemn asseverations to carry her point.

Wearied by a vain opposition to her obstinacy and soon hoping to see her married to Herbert, she was again permitted to receive and pay her own visits, though under restrictions, which she regarded not ; but indecent as it must appear, Mrs. Edwin was no sooner recovered, and in her own house, than whenever Cecilia could escape the observation of her mother, they were inseparable.

The young widow, it is true, had the modesty to keep at home ; but though she had loved the Count, her mind had no resources within itself ; to be alone was to her the most frightful solitude ; and shut out by her imprudence from the most valuable part of society, it required little pains to induce her to accept the company least calculated to retrieve her lost reputation, rather than be alone.

Her large estate, and the great personal fortune settled on the heirs of a woman who was yet childless, rendered her a most interesting object to an officer in the guards. Captain Mellish, with the assistance of a handsome figure, and a competent degree of assurance, contrived to introduce himself in a most favourable light to Mrs. Edwin ; it was not seldom he there met Cecilia, and the story of the Count and Mendez being too recent to be forgot, it furnished him with a hint of providing for a brother officer, who he accordingly introduced, and who as naturally fell desperately in love with Miss Edwin, as he had himself done with the young widow.

Of this connection the family in Grosvenor square were ignorant ; but Mrs. Wellers and Lady Anna heard it from every quarter ; it was circulated in the morning visits, sneered at after dinner, circumstantially repeated at tea, and between the deals spoke of at the card table of every genteel family in the vicinity of St. James's, excepting only at Sir
William

William Edwin's and (while they were present,) where they visited.

Mr. Herbert being daily expected in town to take his seat, and the Edwin family detained only by Anna's affairs, which were nearly settled, it was judged most prudent to avoid adding to their afflictions, by hinting at an affair that ingrossed so much the chat of the town.

Amidst the splendour of riches, and in the highest enjoyment of all they could purchase, Anna found in her internal wretchedness, the fallacy and inefficacy of mere affluence, when the heart is not at ease.

It was in vain the good Mr. Bently continued his efforts to divert her attention from her own sorrows, by administering relief to the less corrosive ones of others; she was the cheerful giver, and the blessing of the faint-hearted followed her steps; but all would not do; the anguish of her mind not only preyed on her spirits, but visibly injured her health; and though she kept them as much as possible from her friends, had many complaints that indicated an early period to a life, not more valuable to her own circle, than to society in general.

Mr. Mordant was distracted at the alteration in her looks; and Collet, who was no less a favourite with Bently for the honesty of his principles than for his medicinal skill, had a plain neat chariot given him, with a pair of strong black horses, on purpose to visit her daily.

Such a rapid rise in the fortune of an apothecary, who did not possess faculties that would at all get him on in his own village, could not fail of exciting curiosity; and perhaps my reader will suspect from the specimen I have already given, some little scandal found its way into the surmises of the judicious inhabitants of Layton.

But

But no such thing happened. Had Mr. Collet been obliged, from unforeseen losses, the decrease of his patients, the illiberal reflections of his neighbours, or any other cause, to have laid down a chariot, instead of setting it up, it would have been a most fortunate circumstance, in that it would have furnished the ladies and gentlemen of the place with an occasion of repeating every little folly of his life ; it would have given them a pretence to sit in judgment on all the errors he either had, or was said to have committed ; and finally, it would have offered a fine opportunity for them to display the compassion of their natures by pitying the poor fellow, and their penetration in having always thought what it would come to.

In the present case his chariot

Increased his practice ;

Improved his skill ;

Gave the *je ne sçai quoi* to his person ;

Brought him invitations to dinner ;

Introduced him to Mrs. Bibbins's tea-table ;

And induced a lady that kept a boarding-school in the town, with whom he had long been enamoured, to make such advances to the diffident apothecary, as opened his mouth, and gave Lady Anna an opportunity of conferring on them the honour of her presence at their nuptials, which were celebrated at her house, with special license, by Mr. Mansel, when Miss Herbert did Mrs. Collet the honour of standing bridesmaid. That afternoon brought to Lady Anna a letter from Wilkin-son, inclosed in one to Mr. Mansel, both which he presented to her ; she immediately apologized to her company for the respect, she said, she must shew an old friend, and then read as follows :

To

To the Reverend DAVID MANSEL.

“ Dear Sir,

“ THE absence of our worthy pastor from his
“ flock, though very decently supplied in point of
“ parochial duty, cannot be more sensibly felt by
“ any one among them than myself ; when will
“ our good rector return ? is a question constantly
“ asked of me ; it is a question I heartily wish I
“ could answer.

“ You have been so good as to assign very kind
“ and considerate reasons for not letting me know
“ the success of your inquiries after Lady Anna
“ Trevanion ; I have brought my mind to rejoice
“ in the discovery ; I exult in the certainty of see-
“ ing the loveliest and most amiable of women in
“ a rank, where her example and merit will be
“ equally and conspicuously beneficial to an admi-
“ ring world ; you say, when I can, from my heart,
“ offer my congratulations on this event, you will
“ lay them at the feet of your charming patroness ;
“ that time is now arrived ; with respect to her my
“ chief happiness is, that I had the penetration to
“ distinguish, to love, not indeed before she was
“ the object of adoration to all who knew her,
“ but before one view could be attributed to me,
“ but the purest affection.

“ The letter I have the honour to inclose to her
“ may expose me to censure as a vain man, but I
“ flatter myself strong proofs would be necessary
“ to prove me a dishonest one ; if my request is
“ honoured with Lady Anna’s approbation, she
“ will communicate it to you, Sir, and I will hope
“ your good office on the subject it contains ; if
“ not,

“ not, she will have the goodness to conceal the
 “ error of, dear Sir,

“ Your gratefully obliged,

“ humble servant,

“ EDWARD WILKINSON.”

To Lady ANNA TREVANION.

(Inclosed in the foregoing.)

“ Madam,

“ IF the crooked lines of this letter speak any
 “ other language than that of the most friendly con-
 “ gratulations on your restoration to that family,
 “ and those honours you was born to adorn, they
 “ do injustice to my feelings, since, ardent as were
 “ my wishes, they were ever damped by a presen-
 “ timent of your superiority and my own unwor-
 “ thiness ; and the discovery, that I was not mis-
 “ taken, though it was impossible for me to know
 “ how, was what I rather expected than feared ;
 “ accept then, madam, from a heart, that, towards
 “ you, has never known guile, the sincerest con-
 “ gratulations ; and happy as you are in the posses-
 “ sion of every earthly blessing, forgive the farther
 “ boldness of one who would die to serve, or give
 “ you pleasure.

“ I am, madam, by the favour of my late friend,
 “ Mr. Herbert, already in possession of considerable
 “ property, the produce of my share in the iron
 “ works my own industry has brought to be so be-
 “ neficial to the company. My lot is fixed here,
 “ far

“ far from the society my inclinations would lead
“ me to, and here I must continue, at least, for
“ some years, before the blessings of independence
“ will empower me to fix on any other residence.
“ I am formed for society ; my heart wants a part-
“ ner; do you know in the number of your friends,
“ madam, one who would receive it, torn and
“ mangled as it is, with its first attachment? Mr.
“ Herbert’s last words to me were,

“ Remember my kindness to you.”

“ The injunction was needless. I can never for-
“ get it. If vanity and my own wishes mislead me,
“ Lady Anna Trevanion will pity, without expo-
“ sing, the folly of her friend.

“ I have thought, in the mild refulgent lustre of
“ Miss Herbert’s eyes, I have seen the inherited
“ her father’s sentiments ; if I am honoured with
“ your approbation, I shall certainly try, whether
“ I am mistaken or not, but it is in your power to
“ silence me for ever, as my obedience to your
“ commands, my veneration for your judgment,
“ and my respect for you, and yours, can end only
“ with the life of,

“ Madam,

“ Your most obedient,

“ And devoted,

“ humble servant,

“ E. WILKINSON.”

Miss Herbert, whose curiosity was very strongly
excited by the manner in which Mr. Mansel deli-
vered

vered Wilkinson's letter, as well as the eagerness with which it was perused, turned so sick before it was finished, she was obliged to quit the room; our heroine immediately followed her, and questioned her with great tenderness, on the cause of her sudden indisposition; her evasions, accompanied with glowing cheeks and conscious glances from her eyes, at the letter, convinced Anna she had the cause in her hand; however, she forbore pressing her farther, and was going, when Miss Herbert, gently detaining her hand said, "dear Lady Anna, answer me one question;" "a thousand, my dear Patty; what would you know?" She again coloured deeply, and in a low voice hardly amounting to a whisper, asked, "if Wilkinson's generous disinterested passion was at last to be rewarded?"

"I believe it is, my dear," answered Anna; "but not by me; there is his letter, I leave it for your perusal, and when you have so done, if your sickness should be quite gone off, you will be so good as to return to the company."

The reader is by this time in possession of a secret long kept, and carefully guarded in the bosom of Miss Herbert; from her infancy up, she beheld Wilkinson with a partial regard; when he addressed Anna at Llandore, she felt every uneasiness a person of her placid turn could be subject to, in such a situation; but as he had never made the most distant advances to her, she kept from every creature living the preference with which she honoured him; and hers would, as most other hopeless passions are apt to do, have died away, without any material injury to her health or spirits; but when, at the death of her father, Mrs. Herbert found in him the tender and respectful solicitude of a son, as well as the unremitting attention, to her affairs, of a sincere friend; when the affection of a brother was added

added to the respect he had ever shewn her, the gentle heart of Patty was irrevocably lost, and gratitude gave too great a sanction to her regard for him, for prudence to keep either within bounds; she gave a loose to sentiments so laudably founded; and Anna being now out of the reach of his addresses, indulged the most flattering hopes, that she should be the next object of his choice.

The letter from him delivered with such form by Mr. Mansel, shocked and alarmed her; was Patty Herbert a queen, Wilkinson should share her crown; and why might not worth, like his, be equally acceptable to Lady Anna? thence her agitation and sickness; but left alone to read a letter, every line of which, in her opinion, might have been penned by a Cicero, her transports were lively and sincere.

“ Ah !” exclaimed she, “ my eyes were never before in my favour ! how often have I lamented their truant variation from the colour of the rest of my family, and envied Charles his fine dark ones ? but now I would not change them, no not for Lady Anna’s.” With a light heart and pleased look, she re-entered the drawing room, and restored, though rather reluctantly, the letter she so highly prized.

“ Well, my dear,” said Lady Anna, archly, “ is your question answered ?”—“ Lord, what nonsense !” was the blushing answer.

Mansel guessed the subject, and gaily offered any wager, he should have the pleasure of performing the sacred ceremony again within a month.

“ A month !” repeated Patty ; “ no, indeed, Mr. Mansel.”

The laughter of the company reminded her the little occasion there was for her answering the good man, as it explained to them what they would not else have so soon suspected, that she was one of the parties alluded to. After a day spent in harmony

and good humour, they parted early on account of the bride and bridegroom's return to Layton.

C H A P. LXXXIV.

More Family Pride.

ANNA felt the highest pleasure in the prospect of seeing her friend happy : she undertook to set her down in Grosvenor square, in order to found Mrs. Herbert and Lady Edwin ; by the first, the offer was received with unaffected pleasure. Wilkinson was the man in the world she would chuse for Patty ; the latter said, “ no objection could be made to the man, but his origin must, from his trade, have been very mean, and his family such, as it would be impossible for them to mix with.”

“ Oh,” answered Patty eagerly, “ he has told mama and me a thousand times, he had not a relation in the world.”

“ Really,” said Anna, surprized, “ I little thought, at Llandore, there was so great a similarity in our circumstances ; why may we not suppose,” continued she to Lady Edwin, “ the meanness of this worthy young man's bringing up, is owing to some particular misfortune in his family ; he certainly possesses sentiments and principles that would do honour to the most elevated station ; and as to his trade, how near was I being an apprentice to a mantua-maker ?—Well,” returned Lady Edwin, “ let him come up ; and if

“ Patty

“Patty—but I see no objection will lay with her,
“we will inquire into his connections.”

At this instant Herbert entered the room—Anna rose immediately, it was late, she had an appointment.

“Nay, my dear,” said Lady Edwin, “we have
“another wedding to settle, you shall not go, you
“are now the principal of the Trevanion family,
“it is proper you should be consulted.”

“Who I, madam?” answered Anna, trembling violently; “indeed I can’t—I beg—you must pardon me, I can have no kind of right;—I—indeed.”

“Anna,” said her aunt, interrupting her, “you
“mistake this matter; but if not so, pray oblige
“me.” She was re-seated, hardly able to conceal her emotions; not daring to trust her eyes towards Herbert, she returned his bow to her with a slight inclination of her head, which had more the appearance of the stiff pride of Lady Edwin to a peer of yesterday, than the gentle elegance of Anna Trevanion.

“Well, Charles,” said Lady Edwin, “we have
“heard of your success—have you seen my daughter?”

“I am just come from her dressing-room.”

“You went to her first then; that was quite
“right; but he is ever wrong, sister?”

Mrs. Herbert’s eyes glistened; her son bowed.
“I hope,” continued Lady Edwin, “she is pleased
“at the honour conferred on you by your country-
“men.”

“I hope so,” was the answer.

“Sir William is a constant attendant at the
“house. I should imagine, Charles, you may do
“your duty by your constituents, without being so
“very punctual.”—It would be his greatest pride

and pleasure to merit the approbation of his friends.

“ Oh had my dear unhappy Hugh but possessed
 “ half your discretion, how should I at this mo-
 “ ment exult, instead of mourning as I incessantly
 “ must; not only the loss of my son, but of his
 “ honour? but let us avoid so unpleasing a retro-
 “ spect; I have yet left the consoling hope of seeing
 “ my daughter happy, of uniting her to a young
 “ man, whose own honour and goodness will be
 “ the best security for hers; and now we are alone,
 “ I will tell you how Sir William and I propose
 “ you shall be established; he has given direction
 “ to put your father’s family seat in complete order
 “ and repair, which, together with the redeemed
 “ estate, will be immediately yours; that and ten
 “ thousand pounds ready money, will, we think
 “ be a proper setting out for such a young pair; and
 “ as Cecilia *now* (sighing) will, first and last be
 “ a great fortune, we shall make what additions to
 “ your income an increase of family may render ne-
 “ cessary to support your rank in the world; at
 “ Sir William’s death, his estate comes to you,
 “ as matter of right; as mine, which I inherit by
 “ my grandmother’s will, besides all our perso-
 “ nals, does to her.

“ You have often wondered sister,” to Mrs. Her-
 bert, “ at my chusing to reside at Dennis Place;
 “ you see now, in the claims of my niece, a good
 “ reason for it; it was the family residence of my
 “ ancestors on my mother’s side, and from my fa-
 “ ther’s death I have always looked with expecta-
 “ tion to what has happened; but happy as I am
 “ to resign to Lady Anna her father’s estate, it
 “ might not have been so pleasing to give up my
 “ mansion,—forgive me, niece, I know what you
 “ would say with that generous earnestness in your
 “ countenance, but Lady Edwin could not accept
 “ that

“ that from courtesy, to which she had not a legal
“ right.—I have taken care Trevanion House, the
“ revered spot which has given birth to so many he-
“ roes, should not wear the appearance of being
“ deserted ; but my home has always been at my
“ own palace ; your mother, Charles, likes Llan-
“ dore, and Patty seems inclined to settle there—
“ have you any objections to what I have said ?”

While Lady Edwin, with a solemnity inspired with the recent calamity in her family, was thus laying down a plan no less generously than prudently concerted, betwixt Sir William and herself, the sensations of her auditors were, though all earnestly attentive, very different. Mrs. Herbert's were those of grateful joy and maternal exultation, at the splendid change a few months had brought about in her son's prospects ; tears of thankful piety ran down her cheek, and her whole soul bent in humble acknowledgments to God : she was ready to cry out with the psalmist, *it is good for me that I have been afflicted.*

Patty's heart expanded with fraternal affection, and it bounded in the happy state of her own hopes ; but Herbert sat the image of despair. “ You are
“ too good, madam,” said he, with a bursting heart and swimming eyes. Often had those eyes been seen melting with sensibility, overflowing with compassion ; and often had that heart throbbed at woes in which pity only gave him a share ; *now*, for his own fate, he could have dropped tears of blood. There sat in his view all he adored on earth, and he was listening to the particular terms of an engagement, from which he could not recede, and which must, by a voluntary act of his own, deprive him of her for ever. Anna's feelings, whatever they were, were soon, in some measure, diverted by Lady Edwin's thus addressing her :

“ And

“ And now, my dear niece,” said she, “ I have
 “ no concern in this world but for you ; how is it,
 “ that so many offers of the first rank have been
 “ so peremptorily declined ? Sir William is perpetually
 “ courted for his interest with our charming
 “ niece to make her election ; I have never
 “ spoke to you on the subject before, nor should I
 “ now, but my hopes, so exceedingly disappointed
 “ where they were most sanguine, in support of
 “ the honour of my ancient family, bid me
 “ look to you for their revival ; a revival actually
 “ necessary to my existence. Sir Howel Gwyn,
 “ of a house as respectable as our own, with
 “ his original inheritance unalienated in any
 “ part, passionately admires Lady Anna Trevanion.”

“ Ah, madam, forbear,” interrupted Anna, in a faint voice, her spirits sunk into a state of nervous debility, “ urge not a change in my condition ; I
 “ *never, no never*, will consent to ;” and, perceiving the surprize of Lady Edwin to be visibly attended with displeasure at such a positive declaration of sentiments so repugnant to her wishes, added, “ did I not promise my cousin to be your comforter ? Are you not now disposing of your
 “ daughter ? suffer me, my dear aunt, to be your
 “ Anna Trevanion ; why should I be in such haste
 “ to part with a name so lately assumed and so
 “ highly valued ?”

The conclusion of this speech mollified the unpleasant beginning ; it was addressed to the vulnerable part of Lady Edwin, and could not fail of being acceptable ; it had indeed often struck her, that a match for her niece might offer, not beneath her acceptance, either in blood or fortune, who, for the possession of such a desirable woman with so large an estate, might consent to take the name of Trevanion, and the value set on it by Anna was so
 flatterring

flattering to her wishes, that it brought tears of pleasure into her eyes.

She was not the only person present so affected; Herbert (though certain she could never be his) heard, with trembling anxiety, Lady Edwin's speech of marriage to Anna, the *never, no never*, from the lips of her he adored with decided earnestness revived his soul, and excess of pleasure took the place which the pangs of despair had a moment before dreadfully filled.

Anna was suffered to retire before supper; though with great reluctance on the part of her friends, who pressed her stay. Comfortless and wretched, she threw herself into her carriage, to which she was attended by Herbert, the aid of whose trembling hand, in silence offered, was in silence rejected.

At her return home, anxious to carry her ideas out of herself, and notwithstanding her own lost happiness, solicitous for that of her friends, she wrote the following letter to Wilkinson:

“ HOW many obligations have I to acknowledge to my friend Mr. Wilkinson? how many apologies are due to him, for my suffering any engagement to prevent my telling him, how sensible I am of his unwearied solicitude in my behalf, when almost friendless his kindness would have protected me from the distress I was fated to experience?

“ The affection you professed for me, I shall always esteem an honour, and reflect on with pleasure; no gratification can equal that of being distinguished by a virtuous mind.

“ I have examined the circle of my friends; the eye you allude to, speaks the language of truth and innocence, and you, I believe, understand it. I have prepared Lady Edwin to esteem my friend Mr. Wilkinson; Mrs. Herbert

“ is

“ is only more partial to her own son. I
 “ cannot dispense with receiving your gratulations
 “ at such a distance, you must come, and let us
 “ hear, if you can talk as well as you can
 “ write.

“ A. TREVANION.”

C H A P. LXXXV.

A Man of no Family.

WITHIN a week from the date of Lady Anna's letter, Wilkinfon arrived in town. He waited on her, and paid his unembarrassed compliments on her situation; she with pleasure observed it, and expressed her high satisfaction at seeing him. Her visits were less and less frequent in Grosvenor Square, and she excused herself whenever she could from going there, but on this occasion she was resolved to impose on herself a sensible mortification, to be of service to her friends: she therefore took him there in her vis-a-vis. Sir William, who always paid the highest deference to her judgment, on her very favourable introduction of Wilkinfon, gave his ready consent to his addresses, though Lady Edwin still adhered to her first opinion, that they ought to know more of his origin, before he was honoured with their general approbation.

The young man, rather abashed at this objection not put in the most delicate terms, after a little

little hesitation, told her his birth was meaner than perhaps she had any idea of; for though he knew he had lost his mother in child-birth, the woman of the house, a very poor one, could never tell whether she had dropped out of the clouds, or sprung out of the earth; but, however, he believed he must submit to the odium of passing for the illegitimate offspring of that mother. He added, nobody ever appeared to claim kindred with her, which he presumed would not have been the case, had she not been very poor; he was, he said, with a smothered agitation and a mixture of pride and indifference, sent to a workhouse, and from thence put apprentice to a whitesmith.

Anna's looks bore testimony to her feelings during this narration, and Patty was obliged to quit the room! Lady Edwin applauded his ingenuity, and asked, if the person was alive where his mother died? "She was, madam," answered he, carelessly, "a month ago; I paid her her annuity then."

"You allow her one," said she, much pleased.

"A trifle, madam; that is her address; I will not, I assure you, attempt to make any advantage of your indulgence; Miss Herbert left the room uneasy, may I have the honour of asking after her health?"—He was shewn to her apartment.

Wilkinson's pride was very much hurt at Lady Edwin's objections, though he could not condemn the motive for making them; he had very high notions of honour, and kept to his word in his interview with Patty, contenting himself with common inquiries; just as he returned to Lady Edwin's dressing-room, Mr. Herbert and Cecilia entered; they had walked out, the morning being fine, to see their new carriage, with which Cecilia was, or said she was, so pleased, that she very officiously

entered into a description of it to Anna, who, ill disposed for the subject, coolly left her, as soon as one moment's cessation of her volubility gave her an opportunity.

Sick at heart, mortified, and dispirited, she sent for Mr. Mansel and Mrs. Wellers into her library, and thus addressed them :

“ I am going, my dear friends, to open to you
“ the anxious feelings of that heart which would
“ not have known concealment, had it been in its
“ power to communicate joy of any kind ; but its
“ sorrows, and those only, would I have kept
“ concealed from your knowledge.

“ Your penetration, the interest you took in
“ my happiness, however, discovered me ; you
“ have long known the source of that misery
“ which must in the end, by its effects on my
“ health, undermine every other comfort in which
“ I abound ; yet I wish to be directed, to be ad-
“ vised ; my resolution abandons me when I have
“ most need of it, to be witness to those nuptials
“ will destroy ; oh, where,” sinking on Mrs.
Wellers' bosom, “ can I fly from them, from
“ myself ?”

This address accompanied with looks of anguish and despair from her, whose delight it was to chase affliction from every other heart, affected her friends exceedingly ; “ and why,” said Mrs. Wellers, “ must it take place at all ? why should two
“ such minds, paired by the Almighty, be sepa-
“ rated ? why must our dear Anna's peace be
“ sacrificed to mere form ? and why must so
“ amiable a young man be lost to every enjoy-
“ ment of life ? he is not less miserable, nor less
“ to be pitied, than you ; he adores you, my be-
“ loved friend.”

“ Ah !

“ Ah! no, no,” answered Anna, shaking her head, the tears dropping off her cheeks on the friendly bosom of Mrs. Wellers.

This was too much for the retentive powers of that good woman; her promise of secrecy was no longer remembered; she persisted in her assertion, and recounted in proof of it, his following her to Dalton’s, his correspondence with Collet, his avowed love for her, which had been his first concern at the moment his misfortune obliged him to quit the kingdom, and which was only restrained by the unhappy concurrence of circumstances that fixed, as a matter beyond doubt, her connection with Edwin.

This was news, indeed, to Anna; it flattered her pride, it gratified her love; she no longer could reproach herself with being so fondly attached to a man who returned it with indifference; if her passion was hopeless, it was not unrequited; however, so many cruel reasons combining, might enforce his consent to an engagement, so necessary to the peace of the family, and consistent with the gratitude and honour of his principles; it was some consolation to know she was beloved by the object of her fond wishes; and that, however painful her sensations, his were no less so.

Mrs. Wellers, eager to take some step to save her young friend from despair, proposed Mansel’s acquainting Herbert of the ill conduct of his wife elect, or she would do it herself; but this was opposed by Anna with great resolution and firmness; it was a measure, she said, beneath her, and unworthy of them; it was derogatory to the honour of her sex, and would lead to a conduct in Herbert which she should be the first to condemn, and the last to forgive; she owned that the pleasure it gave her to believe herself dear to him, was greatly lessened by the little share of happiness that appeared

appeared to await his marriage with Miss Edwin; but that her own opinion was, Mr. Herbert was as much engaged to Cecilia by the law of honour, which she trusted never would be infringed by her, or by her means, as if the nuptial benediction had already passed; that, therefore, she entreated they would give her their words not to interfere in a matter of such delicacy and consequence.

Both Mr. Mansel and Mrs. Wellers' judgment coincided with hers; but it was not judgment, it was sensibility and sympathy that suggested the breaking Herbert's engagement; when cool reason resumed her place, the thing was impracticable.

The Bath scheme was again revived with such warmth on the part of our heroine, that before they separated, the day was fixed for their departure.

C H A P. LXXXVI.

A Ramble in Kensington Gardens.

THE next morning Wilkinson got his old pensioner to wait on Lady Edwin; she was upwards of eighty, and very infirm, but her memory was unimpaired; she said, "the mother of Wilkinson
" came to her house after dusk, and took the only
" room she could let; that she was very ill the
" three months she was there; she suspected she
" was poor, because she used to sell her things;
" and when she could not get any one to buy
" them,

“ them, she (the old woman) used to carry them
“ to pawn; that she was a very handsome young
“ body, but had such an odd way with her, thof
“ she could not say ’twas pride neither; but, how-
“ ever, her good man often and often threatened
“ to ax her all and how about herself; but some
“ how, or some how, they were both afear; and
“ at laft, poor body, she died; poor foul! she was
“ wore to a skillet, and her poor auld man and
“ her was like to come into a deal of trouble about
“ it, for the parifh had been mortal angry; but
“ however, thank God, Neddy lived to pay them
“ all their charges, and God be thanked, to take
“ her old man, who was now blind, and her, off
“ their hands.”

“ Well,” faid Lady Edwin, (pleafed at the principles of pride as well as juftice that had dictated to him the propriety of reimbursing the parifh the expences they had been at for him, as well as fupporting the old couple) “ but is there nothing now
“ in your poffeffion belonging to the poor young
“ woman?”

“ Why, yes,” answered she, “ here’s a bit of
“ glafs, with a few pebbles round it, I cut off her
“ poor neck when I laid her out; I nowed it was
“ worth little, becaufe I fould a ftay-hook for a
“ fervant body twice as big, and the filverfmith
“ gave me but two fhillings for it, whereof it coft
“ a pound; houfever, there’s fome fort of letters
“ on it, and fo I thot I’d keep it, and here (feach-
“ ing an old hufwife where it was wrapped in
“ twenty bits of paper) it is.” Joy flafhed from
Wilkinfon’s eyes; this trinket, he cried, did not
belong to a beggar. Lady Edwin examined it. Oh,
let me fee it, faid Patty, her eyes fteaming; there
are letters on it, which I fancy, my dear, you are
too much affected to make out; give it me, faid
Mrs. Herbert—It was a fmall gold locket, with a
chryftal

chrystal back set round with brilliant sparks, and engraved in blue enamel P. G.

"Pray," said Lady Edwin, "how came the young man to be named Wilkinfon?"

"That's my name, madam, and please your honour; I nowed no other he had a better right to."

"Were they kind to you, Sir?" asked Mrs. Herbert, her eyes suffused with tears.

"Beyond my power to return," answered Wilkinfon; "their little house was my house, and many a plate of pye and pudding I eat there, which the good old soul used to lay by for me, till it was often mouldy."

The old woman was dismissed without the locket, but the hufwife did not return empty nevertheless.

The possibility of his belonging to somebody was very pleasing to Lady Edwin, more especially as it was easy to see Patty's affections were too firmly fixed to give much hope, had his circumstances been as uncertain as his birth, she would have been easily prevailed on to change its object, and Mrs. Herbert as well as Sir William approving Wilkinfon's offer, she no longer opposed the general wish; her consent once obtained, every thing else was soon settled, and it was agreed he should go down to Llandore and get the castle ready to receive his bride, from whence he was to go to Dennis Place, where the Edwins, Mrs. Herbert, and Charles, were to meet him, and Mr. Mansel (being apprized of the time) Lady Edwin said, would perform the double ceremony.

Of this happy conclusion he did not fail to acquaint our heroine.

His news hastened the preparations for the Bath excursion, Anna positively declined all invitations to the weddings, alledging her ill health as the reason.

The

The evening but one, previous to the time fixed for leaving London, Sir William, Lady Edwin, Mrs. and Miss Herbert and Wilkinson, supped with her, and her party consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Wellers, Mr. Mordant, Bently, and Mansel, they took leave that night, Charles being engaged, and Miss Edwin at the Opera.

The next morning being the last of their stay, Mrs. Wellers went home to give some directions to her people, when the weather being fine, her male friends out, and her own reflections the very worst of company, restless alone, dissatisfied abroad, Anna ordered her carriage to Kensington Gardens, a favourite excursion with her, and too early both in the year and day to be much frequented.

Here the still breeze that ushered in the finest spring morning ever seen, the dead silence, the solitude of those delightful shades, brought to her recollection the past, the never to be recalled happiness she had known at dear Llandore; the innocent recreations, the rural pastimes, the morning walk, the evening ramble; "Oh," said she, "that they had never been!"

To banish thought, to avoid reflexions, Anna sought retirement in Kensington Gardens.

Mistaken Anna!

It is not in the haunts of solitude, in the sequestered walk, or shady grove, the heart feels respite from grief like thine.

Love, when founded as hers was, on the approbation of uncontaminated innocence, finds strong support in every beauty of the creation; the region of silence is eloquence itself, and the deepest recess of unfrequented woods, though impervious to the light of heaven, but adds to the scorching pangs of hopeless love.

Not here was Herbert to be forgot.

She strolled on, lost in a sad but pleasing retrospect, when a deep sigh, which sounded just at her ear,

ear, though it came from the other side of a high thickset hedge, made her start, and she immediately recollected how imprudent it was in her to walk alone in a place where she had not met a single creature; she turned back, but was still more alarmed at the footsteps of a man passing quick as it seemed before her in the other walk; but her fears of meeting improper company, soon gave way to surprize, when she saw throw himself on the bench she must pass, deep in thought, the object from whom her ideas never roved; his sighs had pierced her soul; his pensive air, dejected looks, and pale countenance, were all symptoms too correspondent with her own to be disregarded; she stopped irresolute. The seat might ease the body, but it could not calm the mind of Herbert; he soon left it, and walked directly towards her. His person, it is true, approached, but his eyes bent to the earth, and his thoughts deeply engaged, he would have passed her, had she not, by an involuntary motion, and a voice modulated with grief, articulated—Charles!—Hers was at all times the voice of sensibility! it was now most expressively so; it thrilled the soul of Herbert; his eyes were riveted on her face furcharged with tenderness; his tongue refused its function, but with action, that spoke eloquently the language of his heart, encouraged by her soft address, in silent agony he drew near, and took her passive hand. In a moment she recollected her situation, and condemning herself for the liberty her own conduct authorized, withdrew it with a reserved air, and coldly asked him, how he came to chuse such a spot for his morning's amusement.

Too much oppressed to answer in the same style, and too interested to let the present moment escape him;

“My morning amusements, madam,” said he,
“my evening diversions, and my night reflections
“are

“ are the same ; nor business, company, nor retirement, afford me one moment’s respite from misery.”

The solemnity of his address, the almost convulsive motion of his limbs, the faltering of his speech, were all too strong indications of his sincerity, had she been disposed to doubt it—prudence, reason, resolution, all now forsook her—She saw before her Charles Herbert, the victim of honour, the figure of despair—and what in that moment were the ideas of her own grief to his ?—She trembled in her turn ; the colour forsook her lips and cheeks in one moment, but returned in a deeper glow the next—she hesitated, and at last stammered out something of concern—of being sorry—of hoping things would mend, while she suffered him to lead her to the seat he had just quitted ; when dropping on his knees, “ Oh, Anna !” said he, “ dearer to my soul than the light of heaven, than the vital air I breathe, *now* for the first and last time let the undone Herbert claim thy attention—hear me but vow at thy feet the unalterable passion that at this instant fills me with despair ; that from the moment I saw thee, engrossed all of love, of adoration, it is my nature to feel : fly me not,” as she struggled to leave him ; “ what do you fear ? Oh ! thy place of safety is near the heart of Herbert—forgive me, Anna, those frowns should have been assumed when the voice of pity called on Charles ; seek not, amiable creature, to hide the compassion of your heart, nor in those dear moments given by fate, prevent me, by your displeasure, unburthening a heart that else will burst.”

“ If you wish to detain me, Mr. Herbert,” she answered, more composed, “ you must change your posture—what would the censorious world say,
“ was

“ was *you* a *man*, almost a *married man*, to be seen
 “ in this retired spot at my feet ?

“ Oh ! would to God,” he returned with vehemence, “ I had only the world’s censure to combat
 “ —but you wish me to rise, loveliest of women—
 “ See, I obey you ; but for God’s sake do not leave
 “ me ; only hear me, and circumstanced as I am,
 “ I will own it right to be banished your sight for
 “ ever.”

Anna was defeated, and in the attitude of serious attention ; looking on her with eager tenderness, he continued :

“ Do you, or do you not know (Lady Anna Trevanion ; and dearer, far dearer Anna Mansel should be without disguise) I adore you ?”

“ How ! Mr. Herbert, should I know,” answered she with some spirit, “ or ever suspect such a thing ?”

“ Then if you do not already know it, let me
 “ now tell you how I have loved, how followed,
 “ and how doated on you !

“ Here,” continued he (opening his waistcoat and producing the lost breast-bow) “ *this* has been
 “ the companion of my melancholy hours ; to *this*
 “ I fly in rapture from the jewels, the pomp, the
 “ glare with which my hated nuptials are to be
 “ graced”—He then, with the persuasion of truth, and with the eloquence of true affection, repeated every occurrence that had fatally conspired to draw him into his engagement with Cecilia, to which he added a new instance of the amiable mind of his intended bride—he had on his knees implored her to reject him—had offered to make over to her, or any future husband, his right to her father’s estate—had confessed his heart was engaged. The unfeeling woman answered, she was once deficient in her duty, but would now be an obedient daughter—He bewailed in a gush of sorrow his wretched
 fate

fate—solemnly deplored his existence, and prayed that the life of her he adored might be one continued scene of happiness.

The die was now cast; ingenuous, open hearted, and generous, Anna's soul was on her lips, resolutely determined to persevere in giving him up—himself resigned to his lot; no indelicacy could *now*, she thought, be imputed to her for revealing her sentiments in accents which, to the raptured ears of Herbert, was the music of the spheres. She acknowledged her attachment to him, lamented the concurrent misfortunes, which, in the moment it was in her power to render them both happy, had eternally separated them; yet she conjured him to call reason to his aid, to recollect the infinite obligations himself and family were under to Sir William Edwin. As to herself, she solemnly promised for his sake, never to marry. “But Charles,” continued she, her voice lost in her emotions, “we must meet no more;—the moment that gives you to a bride, takes me from my country for ever.”

If excess of joy and grief, struggling in one mind, could annihilate the body, Herbert must have expired.

His Anna, the woman he idolized, who he had not dared to hope thought of him with partiality, returned his passion in a strain of modest rectified tenderness, owned her love, vowing to live and lament him in a state of joyless celibacy; was it to be believed?

“Talk not of the world, or of its censure, dearest Anna,” said he, throwing himself in a transport at her feet, “the universe should not prevent your grateful Herbert from thus thanking his Anna, his charming love;—let me for this one moment call you so—for one moment press this hand to my throbbing heart. Oh, Anna! there is one way—you talk of leaving your country,
“let

“ let us go together, let us fly ; whose feelings
 “ shall we wound ? not Cecilia’s, for she—”

“ *Hold, Sir,*” interrupted Anna, rising, “ we
 “ should wound the heart of Lady Cecilia, of your
 “ mother, of every thinking being ;—we should
 “ give a mortal stab to our own characters ; the
 “ cause of honour and of gratitude would suffer,
 “ whenever our names were mentioned. Go, Sir,
 “ (with indignation and a look that petrified poor
 “ Herbert) learn to respect Virtue—let her paths
 “ be ever so thorny, they lead to peace. We sepa-
 “ rate for ever. *Once you bid me remember your*
 “ *parting words,* they are engraved on my heart.
 “ *You then believed me engaged—your honour bid*
 “ *you tear yourself away—and what has Anna*
 “ *Trevanion done to give you such contemptible*
 “ *ideas of her ? Adieu, Mr. Herbert ; forget this*
 “ *interview, and be happy.*”

The hasty steps she was taking during this part
 of the conversation, soon brought her in view of her
 servants. Herbert followed—“ One word only—
 “ and can you—” as she quickened her pace, mo-
 tioning with her hand for him to go—“ yet stay,”
 as she was leaving the garden half turning,

“ Well, Sir, what would you say ?”

“ Are we then parting ?”

“ We are for ever.”

“ Farewel then for ever, and for ever !”

and with a look of distraction he darted from her
 sight—scarce able to stand, her servants assisted her
 into the carriage.

“ Now I am easy,” said Anna, bursting into
 tears, and she returned home more eager for her
 Bath journey than she had left it, before her stroll
 in Kensington gardens.

C H A P. LXXXVII.

An Accident.

MRS. Wellers was in St. James's square before our heroine; she found Mr. Mordant and Bently with her, who, with Mansel, were lamenting the decline of her health. The visible traces of grief in her looks drew the particular attention of her uncle. "My dearest niece," cried he, "what is it that thus continually clouds your countenance? Why is it always so sadly overcast? I shall, when we come from Bath, be quite ready to return to Jamaica; but if I do not see an alteration in you, how shall I prevail on myself to leave you?"

The starting tear that accompanied this kind inquiry, spread its infection over all present; their looks spoke a language of sensibility to which their tongue gave not utterance; and the general sadness of her friends was but ill calculated to raise the depressed spirits of Anna; for although she had been so unreserved to Mrs. Wellers and Mr. Mansel, and so explicit to Herbert, there was something too shocking to female delicacy, and too humiliating to virgin pride, in any farther confession of the source of her melancholy.

Had it been within the compass of human exertion to remove with honour the obstacles to her wishes, it is most probable her confidence in the indulgence of her uncle, and the tried friendship of Mr. Bently, might have conquered the repugnance every modest female feels to acknowledge a secret passion,

passion, but in her case the obligations of friendship, of honour, of gratitude, and blood, were leagued ; when one of them would have been quite sufficient, in such a mind as Anna's, to banish every idea of hope. As it could therefore answer no purpose but that of distressing her friends, she waved the subject ; and affecting ease her heart was a stranger to, proposed beginning their journey to Bath that afternoon : to the happy she observed all places were alike.

" Sweet girl," sobbed Bently, " if thou shouldst not be happy, I shall be a lunatic a second time !" Alarmed at this friendly menace, Anna flew to the good old man ; and dropping on the hand he was extending towards her, tears of grateful love, promised much more than it was in her power to perform.

'Tis not in nature to conceive a more beautiful picture than the one at that instant exhibited in the anxious friendly looks of the white-headed Bently ; soothed by the gentle tenderness of the lovely Anna, the scene grew too interesting : Bently ran out of the room, as he said, to order the carriages ; and their baggage being before ready, Anna left London, though in such brilliant circumstances, more internally wretched than when she had before parted from the busy spot unallied and unprovided for. Mrs. Wellers and Anna travelled in her post-chaise ; Mr. Bently, Mordant, and Mansel, in the former's coach ; and Polly Dalton, with Mrs. Wellers' maid, in Mr. Mordant's chaise.

They set out at six, intending to sleep at Salt Hill : Anna reposed the most unlimited confidence in Mrs. Wellers ; she repeated to her, during the ride, the interview with Herbert, and found so much comfort in that good woman's sympathetic tenderness, and by her efforts to inspire her with patience and resignation to the unavoidable evils of

this

this life, that when they got to Salt Hill our heroine had very little inclination to put a period to a conversation which was no less interesting than soothing to her unquiet mind ; she therefore wished, if it would not fatigue her friends, as it was moonlight, and their suit too large to fear any danger, to go on to Reading ; her will was always that of her friends, and they proceeded on their journey.

As the two ladies were too much taken up with the subject of their conversation to observe objects as they passed, the drivers not being ordered to stop, went rapidly by a coach which had lost a wheel ; but the gentlemen who followed being less engaged, stopped, and found a gentleman, his wife, two young ladies, and a maid servant in great distress ; as the lady was not in a condition to bear much fatigue, being far advanced in her pregnancy, and the coach too much damaged to proceed, Mr. Bently very politely offered his carriage to the lady, her daughters, and the female attendant, which was thankfully accepted ; and as they were within one mile of Reading, the gentlemen followed on foot.

When our heroine alighted at the King's Arms, she wondered the coach did not immediately follow ; soon, however, it appeared very differently filled from what she expected ; she was told of the accident, and immediately waited on the lady, who received her very politely, and apologized for the trouble she had given, which had been the means of detaining the gentlemen ; she was proceeding to recount the particulars, when a scream from Anna interrupted her. " It is Mrs. Melmoth, cried she, " and this my is Eliza ; her features are not altered, " and they are too dear to me to be forgot." Embracing them both, " How fat you are grown, my " dear Madam ? And how is dear Mr. Melmoth ? " Is this little Sophia ?"—" Yes, and Kitty too ?" Mrs. Melmoth's

Mrs. Melmoth's cool reception of her caresses, as well as the very reserved air with which both she and her daughter received them, though it hurt Anna, may be very easily accounted for; her growth, the alteration of her person, and the appearance of affluence that had surrounded her, were circumstances that could not possibly bring to Mrs. Melmoth's mind the poor, friendless, little orphan she had discarded five years ago; yet the features were familiar to her, and she was trying at recollection, when Mr. Melmoth and Anna's friends entered.

"My dear," said Mrs. Melmoth, "this lady does Eliza and me the honour of recognizing us; but I can't for my life recollect where I have seen her." Anna smiled; the inquiries from the gentlemen of the health of Lady Anna after her journey, puzzled Mr. Melmoth; but after a moment's earnest examination of her face, "I cannot be mistaken," said he, "this must be our Anna; there is not such another set of features in the world." "Yes my dear, my respected instructor," answered she, turning her willing cheek to his salute, "My ever dear benefactress, it is your Anna—Behold, Sir," to her uncle, "the first real friends of my youth. Oh! my Eliza, a hundred fold will I pay you for all the goodness of your parents.—I cannot, indeed," she continued, "procure you a Mrs. Barlow, but I will be your governess myself.—The lessons I learnt from your papa, his daughter shall receive from me." While thus in the grateful effusions of her affectionate heart, she was making professions which were as sincere as natural, the gentlemen were exchanging civilities, and Mrs. Melmoth soon understanding how amply it in was her power to perform her promises, and being in a situation that wanted a friend bad enough, that family congratulated her and each other, on this happy rencontre; all was joy

joy and harmony ; even Herbert was for the time forgot ; they sat up till the morning was far advanced ; and when they retired, our heroine enjoyed, what was very unusual with her, a sound and refreshing sleep, from which she did not awake till near noon.

Mrs. Wellers felt little less pleasure than the parties most concerned in this joyful meeting ; it was particularly grateful to her, from its happening at a period when the mind of her young friend stood in such need of being diverted from one object ; and her pleasure at the effect it had on Anna rendered her a troublesome guest at the inn ; for if she had been to rule, not a bell should have rang or a footstep been heard to disturb the sweet slumber, in which she found her friend.

When they met at breakfast, the respect of the Melmoths was increased by having heard Mr. Mordant repeat the particulars of Anna's birth and rank.

Mr. Melmoth had a mind above the impressions of interest ; his love to his Pet could not be increased by her affluence, but it might by her improved accomplishments, by the display of those sentiments and principles he had, so much to his honour, taught her early years ; and the self-applause naturally resulting from the reflection of a laudable action, gave him such a particular flow of spirits as diffused cheerfulness to all the company—Mrs. Melmoth, though she consented with a good grace to what she could not help, nevertheless longed to figure away again, and was ready to worship Anna, by whose means she promised herself that gratification, as well as that of looking into confusion, the base calumniators who had so unprovokedly injured her character. She attempted, though not without some confusion, to apologise for her conduct at parting with Anna, but *her* generous disposition would not

suffer it—Indeed *she* had long forgot, as far as related to any one but Lord Sutton and Frajan, every disagreeable part of that event, while their many acts of kindness and affection were constantly recollected—She longed to make those happy *who* had so largely contributed to hers, by giving her an education which enabled her to fill her elevated station with such credit to herself and delight to her friends.

She had heard enough of their affairs to be certain they were not above pecuniary aid ; but her delicacy threw so many obstacles in the way of her offering it—she at that moment conceived it a less difficult task to ask a favour than to confer one.

Embarrassed by the generosity of her own feelings, it was long before she could take courage to ask to speak with Mr. and Mrs. Melmoth alone ; nor was she nearer getting over her diffidence from her being without any witness of the goodness of her heart.

Mr. Melmoth, however, led to the wished-for subject by remarking how very fortunate they had been in this meeting, as the chance of their returning to England had been determined by the wickedness of old Mr. Ashby, father-in-law to his sister, who had a mortgage on his estate ; and, notwithstanding, for the last five years, they had lived with the utmost œconomy, giving up the rents towards paying the arrears due (which he owned to be a capital sum) he had now given him notice of a foreclosure.

Anna could then speak---“ Oh ! Sir,” said she, “ I have never felt the happiness of riches so much “ as at this moment ; permit me to advance you “ the sum that will make you easy---Let the orphan “ who owes you more than worlds, be the humble “ means of felicity to those whose goodness has “ been the source of benefits no money can repay.”

This

This offer was too acceptable to Mr. Melmoth not to be received with pleasure, and acknowledged with gratitude—*He*, however, conditioned to transact the matter with her uncle (that gentleman being a better judge of the security) and *for* to have the sole establishment of Eliza.

Her eagerness to serve Mr. Melmoth would not suffer her to delay a moment acquainting her friends with his situation, and the steps she wished to take—it was enough for Mr. Bently that Anna said it—he had more money than he knew what to do with at his bankers—he would give his draft immediately.

“ Mr. Mordant would on no account give up the pleasure of paying the debts of his niece, and Anna decided the friendly contest, by desiring Mr. Mordant to go with Mr. Melmoth to the Lodge, and begging Bently to escort her to Bath, whither she invited Mrs. Melmoth and her family to accompany her, and remain there till the Lodge was in order to receive her.

This met the approbation of all parties, and the next morning they separated on their different tours ; Mr. Bently's care out-travelled his fair companions—a large ready-furnished house being aired and ready to receive them.

C H A P. LXXXVIII.

Another Discovery.

THEY were soon settled, and as soon known; not a person of distinction at the Bath, but left a ticket at the door of the beautiful Welch heiress—her surprize and contempt were equally excited by one among them, finely gilt and ornamented, with the hateful name of Sutton. Ill health and fatigue were very good reasons for the ladies keeping house, and admitting no company for the first two or three days; when Wilkinson, calling in his way to Wales, was persuaded to stay the day there; and Mrs. Melmoth intreated Anna (as they had now a beau) to walk out.

“And pray, madam,” said the good humoured Bently, “what do you make of Mr. Mansel and me?”—“Oh,” answered she, gaily, “a couple of good old women, who stand in need of protectors yourselves; my Eliza shall take care of you both.”

Out they sallied—Almost the first object that struck their eyes was Lord Sutton—“Good heavens!” cried Mrs. Melmoth, “as I live and breathe, there is Anna’s old swain—Nay, nay, don’t be so alarmed, child; see, he has got a bigger woman by half than you.” Anna was startled—The evils she had suffered through his means had implanted in her mind an abhorrence mingled

mingled with fear, and though now safe from insult of any kind in his power to offer, she could not forget how hostile to her peace he had ever been. Mrs. Melmoth and Mrs. Wellers both longed to mortify him, and joined in begging Anna to assist them; the former declaring she would part with her little finger to have the triumph of introducing Lady Anna to him—She at length consented, and they drew near an object almost beneath contempt.

The passion he had really felt for our heroine, and the disappointment of all his hopes, had increased a bilious disorder contracted in India, which, though kept under by dint of care and attention for many years, was now increased to a violent and dangerous degree; which, with some other chronical complaints, the effect of his free living, gave prognostics of a speedy dissolution—His skin, at all times resembling more the walnut than the lily, was now changed to a dingy saffron; the white of his hollow eyes was of the same hue, and the erect carriage of his body changed to a meagre stoop. On his arm—Oh! reader, pity even him—hung a tall, showy woman of twenty-seven whose bold eye wandered in search of prey from face to face of every male she met, and when they were encountered by an acquaintance, which was at every third step, the wanton tongue and leering look, significantly pointed to their contempt the dying wretch who supported her, and who, from his soul, hated as much as he feared her.

His poor diseased body, covered in May with furs, his short breath, and hectic cough, formed a sad contrast to the tawdry, flaunting, and expensive trapping, the athletic stride, and strong muscular looks of his companion: to finish the group, ready to offer his obsequious arm, to smile at her wit, to echo her laugh, and to return her sly wink at his patron

patron (at whose expence he now shone forth in a fresh suit of regimentals) followed Stevens, the humble toad-eater of the little great man.

“ Ah !” said Mrs. Melmoth, “ for heaven’s sake, dear Lady Anna, quicken your pace ; we shall lose him at last ; ah, unfortunate, see, he goes into that shop.” Bently comforted her with the information of its being Bull’s Library, and that they might follow him : “ Behold him,” continued the good old man, “ hardly for an honest man, past the prime of his days, bending double with infirmities, a burden to himself, an antidote to the creature of his vices : no pitying friend, no kind Anna, to sooth and cheer him in the dark hour of pain, but a common prostitute, and the venal companion of his wickedness, a subaltern in his own dirty corps ; who, by *pimping* and fawning, got a pair of colours, where it was a scandal to serve :—how ghastly an image of sin he looks !”

They were by this time at the door of the shop : Mrs. Melmoth entered first ; Lord Sutton knew Mr. Melmoth was returned to England. Mr. Ashby, a man not more famous for his riches, than for the infamous mode of acquiring them, had, in the affair of Melmoth Lodge, acted as agent to the noble Lord, who impatiently waited the re-establishment of his health, again to revisit that delightful retreat, not, as formerly, to pay visits, or to lay plots for the seduction of innocence, but to purchase it, as he said, and, as Mrs. Ashby hoped, to return it to the family. Cool enough, therefore, was his salutation to Mrs. Melmoth ; he hoped her husband was well, without looking off the pamphlet he was reading, or Charlotte Madan’s vouchsafing to accompany her glance with a bend of the knee ; the man of the shop, however, knew the Trevanion delivery, and, in a great bustle, told his lordship,

Lady

Lady Anna Trevanion, the greatest beauty, and the greatest fortune in the place, was coming in. Disappointment and illness, which had reduced him to a skeleton, had not yet killed his vanity; his most pleasing looks were called forth, and he arose at her entrance.

A spectre could not have struck him with more astonishment: his friend Dalton had not again tempted his anger, with any farther account of the fugitive Anna; and he had given her up with a reluctance that had actually injured his health; and a complication of disorders had since fully employed his time.

Deserted by those gay companions with whom he delighted to mix, when well, but who ever fly from sickness and misfortune, he had been, while in London, shut up with Villars and the low-bred Stevens; the latter, alike ignorant of men and manners in genteel life, amused him with anecdotes out of the scandalous chronicle, laughed at his wit, and, for the thousandth time, applauded his Asiatic exploits: it was therefore unlikely, public and much talked of as her history was, it should reach him; how then could he expect to meet in the celebrated heiress, the poor girl, whom he had robbed of her friends in so cruel a manner.

His first emotions were those of joy at meeting her; but when he saw how surrounded with friends, who loved and respected her, abounding with the wealth, he had but lately found would *not* do every thing, and inheriting, in her own natural right, that rank and title so inestimable in his eyes, and for which he deemed no sacrifice an equivalent, the shame and mortification was too much even for him. He was making toward the door, when another face more appalling to him than hers, met his eyes: it was Wilkinson; who, advancing, begged to have

have the honour of reminding his Lordship of their last conversation ; in which he had told him, he would not let him rest till justice was done to the injured character of Anna Mansel. He told him, the providence of heaven had anticipated the amends he demanded, which was that of manifesting her innocence ; and the same power would now have the effect of exposing his guilt in this world, previous to the grand reckoning in the next.

“ Who,” said Bently, eagerly, to Mrs. Wellers, “ is this young man ?” A Welch acquaintance of “ Mansel’s,” answered she, “ and a fine spirited fellow he is.”—Wilkinson continued,---

“ When I behold that decayed frame, convulsed, “ as it now is, with guilt,---that countenance, “ where the traits of evil actions so strongly counteract the indulgencies wrinkled infirmity would “ else bespeak,---those hoary locks, vainly to tured “ to conceal the whiteness, which, in virtuous age, “ would claim respect, I feel a softness rising into “ pity, for the defaced image of God ;---but when “ I turn my eye to that sweet flower,---when I consider it is to a succession of miraculous events we “ now owe her escape from your infernal arts ; “ that her lovely person has not been contaminated ; that her countenance, where the hand of nature has so legibly wrote angel, is not robbed of “ its most attractive graces, innocence and modesty ; that her mind, where benevolence, purity, and “ every female excellence reside, is not corrupted, “ and *that* by a wretch, who is as much from personal, as mental demerits, an antidote to women “ of common decency ; pity is no more ; indignation usurps its place. The day of reckoning, as “ to this world, is at hand. *Here* by the most “ lucky accident are all the parties but one, who “ has for the present escaped, who durst accuse “ that lady.--You, Madam,” to Mrs. Melmoth, “ are

“are called on, by the laws of honour and justice,
“to expose this disgrace of nobility.”

“Let me pass, scoundrel,” said Lord Sutton, in a fury—“Stevens, make away.”

“If Stevens stirs, my Lord,” answered Wilkinson coolly, “he goes over these ballustrades.”

“What, do you mean to murder me, villain?”
—The company now interposed.—Mrs. Melmoth was now vexed she had urged this interview; and Anna, who knew not, in her own practice, what revenge was, begged Wilkinson to let him go; said she was the offended person.

“Pardon me, Lady Anna,” said the resolute young man, “as being the representative of beauty, “innocence and virtue, you are offended; but it “is those divine attributes themselves *that* man has “injured. His whole life has been one continued “scene of outrage to one or other of them:—I “cannot mean to hurt his crazy person, but see “you not, it is his soul that shakes?—Come, my “Lord, be seated.” Here,” drawing out his watch, and shewing it to him,—“one half hour “will—I wish to hold converse with you.”—He was proceeding, when, to the utter amazement of the company, the noble Lord fainted away, the man of the shop fortunately catching him in time to prevent his fall.

The ladies were alarmed, and Charlotte abusive, not that she cared a pin for the situation of her noble keeper, but she had an inveterate hatred to modesty; it excited her ire wherever she met it, and she never missed an opportunity of testifying this amiable disposition.

From her, and from her appearance, the gentle soul of Anna shrunk with abhorrence; and Bently, taking hold of Wilkinson’s arm, said, “be merciful, young man; there is in your countenance “what shocks that monster of guilt more than all

“ your virtuous indignation can utter. I am myself scarce recovered from a fit of horror at your voice and looks ; he, I am sure, can bear neither. See, he revives. Suffer him to depart whither fate and his own inclination leads him ; his testimony in her favour is an insult to Lady Anna. Let him go.”

“ You are at liberty to depart, my Lord,” said Lady Anna ; “ I forgive you.---You are indispensed. I am sorry we came in.”

Without attending to her, his eyes fixed on Wilkinson, he told him he was ready, he was prepared for the half hour, and requested him to come near him. “ I will hear,” he continued, “ all you have to say, when you have gratified me in one point ---let me see your watch.”

“ Ah, my Lord, you shall hold it, if you please.”

He took it in his hand, trembling violently, and, looking on the locket which was fastened to the chain, and on Wilkinson, alternately, the tears rolling down his cheeks, at length, with sighs and groans he could not now restrain,

“ This trinket, I need not ask for,---I know, I feel, it was thy mother’s ; and thou wilt, in thy turn, feel horror, when thou art told thou art---” his voice sinking into a faint whisper, “ *my son.*”

Amazement kept all dumb but Bently, whose sighs, though less audible, were bitter, and who, with his spread hand on his bosom, seemed waiting the event, in agitation not to be described.

Anna went to him, and, supposing him affected, as they all were at what was passing, the unhappy malady he had been afflicted with always in her thoughts, when she saw him unusually moved,---she begged him to retire into an adjoining room with her ;---he did so,---and there, supported by his charming young friend, he gave vent to the oppression

oppression on his heart ; and, (in a voice scarce articulate from his agitation) told her, Wilkinson's mother was his wife ! Anna started with surprize and sympathy.

“ Oh ! too sure, cried he, she was ! seduced, ruined, and abandoned by this villain !—Where, Oh ! where—in what obscure corner of the earth did she finish her wretched being ?—It was in *her* fate I felt my Anna's,—*her* catastrophe made me tremble for thine.—His name was a sufficient proof of baseness,—and your avoiding him of innocence. Dear, ill-fated wife of my soul !—but let me not think of her

“ Her voice still vibrates on my ravished ear ; still melting there, and with voluptuous sweetness, thrilling through my heart.—Oh ! to forget her.”

Anna wept in perfect agony at this renewal of grief in a friend she now more than ever revered ; she persuaded him to go no more into the presence of a man, who had so deeply injured him ; he, indeed, deterred as much by his own principles, which held duelling but as murder palliated, as by the pitiable state in which he was, which took away every thought of revenge, wished not ever more to behold the wretch, who, in return for his friendship and hospitality, had ruined his peace, and robbed him of every earthly happiness ; he therefore went out at a side door, telling Anna, at parting, that as now, in her sweet society, and in her promise of never driving from her presence an old man that loved her, he promised himself some few days of peace ; and though Wilkinson was the son of a villain, he was also the offspring of his lost Caroline, and he might, in time, wish to be better known to him ; he would chuse it should be in his own name and character.—“ You will therefore, Lady Anna,” added he, “ announce me to your friends.”

“ friends by my real name, which is Summers
 “ The cause for changing it will reveal itself.”

When she returned to the company, another affecting scene presented itself. Wilkinson was at that time bending his knee to Sutton, whose looks betrayed how little his conscience told him he merited respect, though, from his own son; the time was approaching, of which his feelings gave him but a melancholy preface, when art, plausibility, or even riches, would not avail.

A martyr to disease, unconnected with any of those blessed ties that, in soft sympathy and respectful love, can sooth the stern approach of death drawing near to that omnipotent being, whose commands had all been broke, but from whose awful sentence of retribution his soul shrunk with terror, he had vainly varied the scene from place to place.

He had in a paroxysm of rage turned the unoffending Villars out of his house, to which, though in poverty, and experiencing the reverse of fate, which, in her unenviable situation, is sure to be the object of triumph to the world, she refused to return; but though he could thus brutally hector over this poor woman, whose case was the more pitiable as her heart had neither shared in either the sin or show of her situation, he wanted spirit to assume the mastership of his own house at Bath, where a wretch, whose existence was a scandal to society, lived in splendour; making the man who supported her the common theme of her mirth among her abandoned associates: for this reason he put off his journey to Bath, though advised as the only remedy, till he was almost unable to perform the journey; at last, under the protection of Stevens, he had ventured to approach his own house.

This

This consequential person was the son of a fisherman, who had been sent a cadet to India, by the interest of a handsome housemaid (his relation) to a Director, and who by implicitly obeying the private as well as public commands of his then Colonel, had obtained from him a lieutenant's commission, and was further honoured with being his constant and only companion.

It happened very unfortunately for this person, that his going to India was not fixed on earlier, as Lord Sutton left that part of the world within two years after his arrival there; so that it was only in that just distinguisher of merit's power to put him over the heads of a score or two of young men of some pretensions; weak ones indeed, it must be confessed, such as melting under the torrid zone, from their infancy, warring with infidels, and losing their blood in the company's service; trifles of small importance in comparison with the interest of a great man; and wholly disregarded, till the Colonel left the country, when his successor, although he had strongly recommended Stevens, not seeing with his eyes, and having no occasion for the private services of so clever a fellow, was, unfortunately for him, of opinion he had already advanced higher in rank than he could ever merit, and gave him to understand there was but one way to retain a promotion in his idea very ill bestowed. Stevens, always good at a hint, followed his patron, and contrived to render himself as necessary to Lord Sutton in England, as he had been to Colonel Gorget in India.

But the interview with Wilkinson, and that young man's sense and spirit, the genuine emblems of the honour and rectitude of his principles, opened a new scene; it gave Lord Sutton, in the offspring of his own blood, a desirable companion for his heavy hours, an eligible protection from the insults
to

to which his infirm state subjected a man whom nobody esteemed, and an opportunity of appeasing the unceasing torments of his conscience, by making some reparation for his cruelty to the woman he had destroyed in acting kindly to her son. But from what had passed, he actually feared to offer Wilkinson his protection, concluding that the discovery of his consanguinity, by revealing the injuries of his mother, must impress him with sentiments of hatred and contempt for the author of them.

Strong, indeed, were the conflicts in the bosom of his son; it was not without great repugnance he could prevail on himself to bend his knee to a man his heart was inured to abhor; but the agitation, the emaciated figure, the fond expression of *my son*, *my son*, repeated in faint and faltering accents by a parent who looked as if quitting the world, softened and affected the noble-minded Wilkinson;—he was in the attitude of kneeling when Anna entered the room.

Lord Sutton attempted to rise when he saw her, but his weakness prevented that mark of respect; he besought her forgiveness, which he hoped the happy discovery of his son, who he would amply reward for his friendship to her, would induce her to grant; and that an event so very remarkable, might be the means of a general pardon; to accelerate which, he would voluntarily do her the justice that had been demanded, and immediately related, without any other reserve than what was due to dear self, giving the credit of the villany to his confederate Trajan, all the schemes concerted between them to draw her into his snares, avowing his full intention, when she left Layton, to make her every honourable amends in his power. He congratulated her on her present rank, which was briefly hinted to him; and being as able as willing to make atonement

atonement for the errors of his conduct, he entreated it might be no more remembered.

Anna, for the first time in her life, felt herself obdurate to the pleas of penitence. Atonement! she repeated to herself, what atonement *can* be made to our generous Summers? what *were* the pangs of Lord Sutton to *his*? how can *he* ever forgive the wretch by whose baseness he was first deprived of his wife's honour and then of his reason? she had yet before her the venerable old man struggling with his sorrow:—with that impression on her mind, she turned from Sutton with unaffected contempt and disgust.

Mrs. Wellers, glad to see the prospect that opened for Wilkinson, and knowing the natural sweetness of Anna's disposition, saw her with wonder turn unmoved by the voice of repentance. Wilkinson followed her retreating steps—"Will you not, Lady Anna," said he, "forgive *my father*?"

"For me, Sir," answered she, "to forgive his unprosperous iniquity, is easy; and he will, I presume, make Mrs. Melmoth amends for his ungrateful return to her goodness and hospitality. On you, Sir, who are his acknowledged son, he has the most sacred claims; but there is one from whom I am just parted, with the barbed arrow deep in his heart, from whence no concession, no repentance, no act of kindness can extract it; *his* anguish must, I fear, my Lord, embitter your days, however happy such a son, and the revived attention of such friends (looking at Mrs. Melmoth) may make you."

The friends of Anna were as much at a loss as the guilty Lord; they could by no means develope her meaning. Observing the curiosity she excited,

“ what arguments,” she continued, “ what plea,
“ or what promises will Lord Sutton use to pre-
“vail on the husband of Mr. Wilkinson’s mother,
“ on my good Mrs. Wellers’ friend Bently, the
“ kind protector of Anna Mansel, to forgive him?
“ Who will be his advocate with General Sum-
“mers? Yes, Madam,” to Mrs. Wellers, “ there
“ the calamity originated that deprived our excel-
“lent friend of his senses!”

Lord Sutton started with guilt and astonishment—It was long since the name of the unhappy general had been heard in the world. He had, it is true, whether from motives of curiosity or fear I will not determine, made private inquiries after the man he had so barbarously injured, and learnt the dreadful consequence of loss of peace was loss of reason; all further researches proving fruitless, he concluded he had long joined the group of accusing spirits; which, whether from the burning climes of India, or the freezing ones of Iceland, are sure to meet in the presence of an avenging and just Creator.

After a short silence, “ I have none, Madam,” answered the ennobled culprit, “ but those which
“ flow from your persuasive lips; and be assured
“ if you will condescend to plead my cause, or ra-
“ther your own, which is mercy and compassion,
“ in every succeeding act of my life, I will be go-
“verned by you; and in earnest of my intention
“ to court the applause of an angel, I will begin
“ with one I know will plead with you beyond all
“ I can say. Mrs. Melmoth, how it was possible
“ for you, so early in life, to involve yourselves
“ so, you best know:—your husband’s grandfa-
“ther with his estate, which, till the latter part
“ of his life, was little more than half what he
“ left his son, brought up a large and expensive
“ family; all of whom are now in different lines
“ respectable

“respectable and valuable members of the community, extending their influence and connections to different parts of the kingdom, while the heir and representative of the family has been so extremely inattentive both to the honour and interest of it, as to sell the greatest part, and deeply mortgage the rest, of the ample estate he inherited from his ancestors.”

“You must pardon this retrospect——respect to the late worthy Mr. Melmoth, my first and best benefactor and friend calls for it. *My crimes* will be to the advantage of your family; the paternal estate shall once more be your own.”

“That it is already,” replied Mrs. Melmoth with spirit: “Lady Anna’s goodness and generosity have already furnished Mr. Melmoth with means to secure that; and though so much better qualified for a reprover than your Lordship, without a single reflection.”

“Well, Madam,” returned the mortified peer, “it will be to my honour to follow her example; and that I may be sure not to repeat the error, it seems I have been guilty of, my favours shall be conferred where no room has been given for reproof. I have, as you now know, a son; my fortune must be therefore divided; but I will immediately settle five thousand pounds on each of your daughters.”

“Will you, my Lord?” answered she; “Why then I declare you will be very good at last. And”——

She was interrupted in acknowledgements, which came but half cordial from her, by the intervention of Charlotte Madan, who had no idea of standing a silent spectator while Lord Sutton gave away his fortune by thousands.

“Come,

“Come, come, my Lord, don’t be ridiculous,” said the impenetrable woman, “do let us go; you have certainly an insane fit on you this morning. Five thousand pounds indeed!”

Lady Anna and her party, finding what an addition was going to be added to their conversation, immediately left them, all but Wilkinson; who, at his earnest request, accompanied Lord Sutton home, followed by Stevens and his charming mistress.

The Peer, now conscious of the happy contrast in his situation, on entering his own house, from that in which he had left it, was no sooner in his library, than he revealed to his son the hatred he bore Madan; and leaving the terms entirely to him, entreated him to clear the house of the infamous incumbrance before he came to it, which he hoped would be soon for a continuance. Wilkinson soon knew enough of his father’s wishes to authorize an immediate alteration in his house; he wanted not resolution or understanding. Sorely against her will, the divine Charlotte was obliged to settle the terms of abdicating with him. He offered her 200l. a year for life. She refused to accept it. He gave her an hour to resolve in. She continued obstinate. He then offered her 100l. She was outrageous. “And,” continued he, “if you do not in half an hour know your own interest, it shall be taught you by a constable, who will have directions to turn you out without any thing.” Away went Madan to consult her associates; within the time she returned better acquainted with the character of the man she had to deal with, accepted the annuity, removed her valuables, and set off to London the same night.

Stevens was permitted to continue; and Villars was sent for, as his Lordship’s increasing disorders rendered a nurse necessary, and no one acquitted herself

herself in that character so much to his satisfaction. At Wilkinson's requisition, and promise to provide for her, she returned to her office, to the great joy of his Lordship.

C H A P. LXXXIX.

Truth will out.

THIS sudden fit of penitence in a man whose whole life had been one continued scene of wickedness, may well surprize my readers—the fact is, Lord Sutton was still consistent—vanity and ostentation were yet the ruling passions of his mind, a sense of present guilt, and a dread of future punishment, assisted perhaps a little by dame Nature in his feelings towards Wilkinson, put him entirely off his guard in the recent discovery of his son; but had that young man come to him in the garb of poverty, destitute of wealth, and friendless, unprotected and unprovided for, far, very far be it from me to insinuate Lord Sutton could have possibly given way to the appearance of repentance and paternal affection in such a degree: the case was widely different; Wilkinson was in a state of genteel independence, the reward of his own merit; he was moreover on the point of marriage into an antient and honourable family; and, his connections were of so valuable a sort, that he who had been aiming at respectability his whole life without success, now saw an opening, through the offspring of her he had destroyed, which he flattered

tered himself might give him an opportunity to form connections among that part of mankind he now beheld in the most favourable point of view—being wholly deserted by the flimsy undesirable attachments his wealth had made, self-interest, therefore, that unerring guide to minds like his, taught him, now to assume the semblance of penitence; and ostentation gave to Mr. Melmoth's children what gratitude wanted power to enforce. He affected the most profound respect for Lady Anna; nothing that had the sanction of her approbation, but met his hearty concurrence, nor any thing she disliked would he bear to hear mentioned. Miss Herbert was the friend of Lady Anna; how then could he be less than charmed with his intended daughter-in-law—The plan of going to Wales so soon was what he could by no means consent to: he thought, and with reason, as it was in his power to set his son above any kind of traffic, he had a right to his company till his health should be restored; which, though his disorder and weakness increased every hour, he had great hopes of; and he much wished to see Miss Herbert—the result was, Wilkinson wrote a state of the whole affair to Mrs. Herbert, requesting she would prevail on his dear Patty to accompany her to Bath, previous to their journey to Wales.

Anna, whose natural abhorrence still continued to Lord Sutton, and whose affection and respect for General Summers was too great to suffer any personal intercourse to subsist between her and the object of his detestation, was yet prevailed on by her regard for Miss Herbert, and Wilkinson, to answer with civility the letters he was continually pestering her with, under the pretence of asking her advice and opinion, and she took care to bind him to his promise on behalf of the Miss Melmoths.

Mr. Mel-

Mr. Melmoth in the mean time wrote from the Lodge; he informed them he had changed the deeds, and was then preparing for the reception of his lady: the money he said was paid Mr. Ashby at the grove, in the presence of his sister, whose looks and behaviour were, one spiteful, the other rude—"Oh," cried Mrs. Melmoth, exultingly, "the very first thing I do shall be to visit her, and entertain her with Lady Anna's history; she will not outlive that, and Lord Sutton's gift to my girl, nor exist in the presence of my sweet natural daughter." It was time, indeed, Mrs. Melmoth should begin to prepare for her confinement. She gratefully consented to resign Eliza to the care of Lady Anna, whose fondness for her increased every moment. She was a lovely young creature; her education had been somewhat neglected; but she had now every advantage good instructors and close application could give.

Those occurrences, which threw the interest of her friends so much in her way, contributed not a little to the quiet of her own mind. Constantly employed, and that in a manner most delightful to herself, as she was contributing to the happiness of others, an avocation so perfectly agreeable to her select friends, that it fully engaged them all, she found herself less unhappy than, in the situation of her mind, might be expected.

Lord Sutton's illness increasing beyond a possibility of recovery, his son's constant attendance on him became absolutely necessary; for, though Stevens was still there, he could not bear to be left alone with him—However he had *lived*, his Lordship chose to *die* in decent company.

From this circumstance it was, his wish to see Miss Herbert had not been mentioned to Anna. He had wrote to Sir William Edwin his full approbation of his son's choice, and signified his intention

tion of settling ten thousand pounds on Miss Herbert.—*That*, indeed, he had consulted her on; but of the request that accompanied it she was entirely ignorant; which was, that they might be married at Bath—that as his recovery was retarded beyond his hope, he might not lose the comfort of his son's company.

This request, very reluctantly on the part of Lady Edwin, was granted. Miss Edwin's entreaties carried Sir William and his lady, and consequently Mr. Herbert, in the party to Bath; and Anna, whose friends were beginning to congratulate her, and themselves, on her returning health and tranquillity, found all her philosophy evaporate at sight of Miss Herbert, who flew into her dressing-room with spirits greatly elated at the unexpected good fortune of her lover, and imparted to her the invitation that had brought them to Bath, entreating her friend to present her to Lord Sutton.

The astonishment of our heroine, the distress and embarrassment this step occasioned her, is not to be conceived. She came to Bath to avoid being witness to scenes she apprehended would affect her life;—by the strangest accident in the world, that circumstance had been the imperceptible means of her being pursued by what she dreaded more than death.

She condemned Herbert, in her own mind, for being prevailed on to come where she was. She accused him of barbarity; and could hardly refrain from openly expressing her displeasure against him, and complaints at the fate that followed her: but it was still in her power to remove, and her ill health gave her an excuse for leaving a place that did not agree with her, and for not going out or seeing company while she stayed.

But

But Patty was too earnest in her petition, to be introduced by her to Lord Sutton, to be refused. It was at all times painful to Anna to put a negative on any request made to her, consistent with her own ideas of propriety. She was incapable of an act of ill-nature or caprice; and therefore agreed to call for what part of the family chose to go, at seven in the evening; but excused herself, in a card, from paying her respects to her aunt at their lodgings, on account of her health. This could be hardly called an excuse; it was confirmed by the alteration in her looks; for never did there breathe so exact a picture of Shakespeare's love-lorn maid; she pined in thought; and her solicitude to deceive her friends was so great, she, it might be literally and truly said, smiled at grief.

Miss Herbert left her exceedingly shocked; and meeting her brother as she was going into their lodgings, "Oh! Charles," said she, "Lady Anna Trevanion is very ill—you cannot think how she is altered—Good heavens! what is the matter, brother? How pale you are!"—He answered not, but passed on. She repeated her bad news to Lady Edwin and Mrs. Herbert; they were both extremely concerned; and were going to her directly, but Wilkinfon, who had not yet, though it was his father's particular request, assumed the name of Gorget, coming to wait on Sir William, to name the trust for Patty's settlement, they were prevented.

Miss Edwin then made her appearance; she had been, she said, half the town over, and actually did leave a card at Anna's door.

Mr. Summers, at dinner, mentioned a circumstance that appeared odd to him; he met Miss Edwin, and not knowing the family were come to Bath, was rather surpris'd; he had the curiosity
to

to see where she went; she had not passed him many paces before she was joined by a young officer, and on enquiry of a chairman who belonged to the house he saw her enter, found Mrs. Edwin was likewise at Bath, and lodged there.

Mrs. Wellers, at this intelligence, very seriously remonstrated against concealing, at least from Sir William and Lady Edwin, the improper connection their daughter was forming, there would else, she was sure, be another tragical scene in the family; Anna would not hear of any kind of interference from her friends; and being hurt at Mrs. Wellers' persisting in the justice of the act, it was dropped.

In the evening having apprized Lord Sutton of her intentions, Lady Anna called for Mrs. and Miss Herbert; Lady Cecilia refusing to visit, on any terms, a man who had offered such indignities to her family, did not accompany them, but engaged with Sir William to meet her at their return at her own house. They were received at Sutton House by Mr. Wilkinfon, and conducted into the library which adjoined his Lordship's dressing room, and was the farthest place his weakness would suffer him to be moved to.

He was rejoiced to see Lady Anna on any occasion, and in this company her's was doubly welcome, exhibited his grandeur, and talked very largely of the great things he meant to do for his son; he was very rich, and as he had informed Sir William Edwin this morning, when he did him the honour of calling on him, he intended to leave the principal part of his fortune to his son, and his heirs.

He presented Miss Herbert with a very fine suit of pearl, and some valuable diamonds, when looking at Anna, with a sigh, he could not restrain, he said,

said, in a low voice, were designed for another occasion.

Mrs. Herbert then told him, she was at a loss, kind as he was to her daughter, how to mention Lady Cecilia's family reason for chusing Miss Edwin should be married at Trevanion, all her generation but one had plighted *their* vows at the family chapel, and all but *that* one had been prosperous and happy. Patty had engaged to accompany her cousin to the altar; and although Lady Edwin did not say any thing, she was sure it would very much displease and hurt her if any alteration took place; the obligations of her family to her brother and sister, she added, were so numerous, as well as binding, it would be with great pain she should take any step which did not meet their entire approbation.

Anna, who longed to get rid of them at any rate, seconded Mrs. Herbert; encouraged by so powerful an advocate, she ventured to ask his Lordship's permission for his son's accompanying them to Wales, and there to have the two ceremonies performed, as before agreed, at one time; he, with his usual deference and partiality to Lady Anna, consented to their request, on condition his son's stay did not exceed a fortnight; thus circumscribed in point of time, which it was the more necessary for Wilkinson to observe, as his Lordship's state of health was so very precarious, when they returned, Lady Edwin fixed on leaving Bath the next day.

C H A P. XC.

Female Philosophy.

THE alteration in the looks of our heroine was too striking to escape the notice of Lady Edwin—Greatly alarmed, she renewed her intreaties for her to accompany them into Wales, but finding she could not prevail, told her she would be denied no longer than till her daughter was married: Trevanion House, which had been so long untenanted, must wait another summer: she would not be denied; her dear niece must positively finish this with her.

Anna smiled; but nothing was farther from her thoughts than going to any place where it was possible to meet Charles Herbert and his bride—her feelings convinced her, *that* was a trial she was not equal to—indeed the effect the idea of being near them had on her health, rendered the resolution to avoid them absolutely necessary. She had been in a constant flutter of spirits from the instant of their arrival—she dreaded to meet Mr. Herbert, yet her eyes were perpetually strained after each passing object—She knew *he* would not presume to come to her house; yet every rap at the door threw her into a violent palpitation; she gasped for breath when his name was mentioned; but all other subjects on which the conversation turned during the time her aunt stayed, wanted power to engage her attention; the visible change of her countenance in the course of the evening were observed with equal

equal sorrow and anxiety by the friendly Mrs. Wellers. When Lady Edwin took her leave, Anna, who had bore up like a true heroine, owned she found herself very much indisposed; the agitation of her spirits was so great, that a fever of the hectic kind, to which she was very subject, increased with such violence before next morning, that quiet was recommended by her physician, as the only means of preventing its still farther alarm. Lady Edwin was admitted for five minutes only; her concern for her niece was sincere and unaffected; she told Mrs. Wellers, though the marriage of her daughter was of such importance to her peace, she did not think it possible she could survive any accident that might happen to break it off; yet her amiable niece was too dear, to be left in such a state: if, therefore, a very favourable alteration did not take place in her health, she would postpone her journey, in order to give Lady Anna her personal attendance.

Mrs. Wellers saw in Lady Edwin's solicitude to accomplish the union between Charles and Cecilia, the folly of hoping that any thing could happen from procrastination, in the least flattering to her wishes—she knew the honour of the family could not be more engaged than the delicacy of Anna, who would shudder at the thought of connecting herself with a man who had been guilty of a breach of contract, nor indeed had she any idea her fortitude would be put to that trial by Mr. Herbert.

It was, therefore, as matters stood, her opinion, the sooner the wedding was solemnized, the sooner Lady Anna would recover her health and peace; the one much injured and the other intirely broke. She imparted her thoughts to Mr. Mansel, who coincided with her, and joined her in intreaties to their young friend, to consider, before it was too

late, the injury she was doing **herself, and the pain** she inflicted on her friends.

Anna owned the propriety of **their arguments**, and more severely condemned her own weakness than it was possible for them to do, but bewailed her inability to conquer it.

“If this fresh aggravation had not happened,” said she, “change of scene, time, and the many calls of humanity and charity, on the power I am invested with, by filling my time in the exercises of benevolence, might have done much for me—but fate itself pursues me—the evil I dread more than the deprivation of my existence, follows my steps—would to God they were married—I really believe in my present state of mind, that event only can give me one moment’s ease.”

As this was precisely the opinion of both Mrs. Wellers and Mr. Mansel, they informed her of the resolution Lady Edwin had taken to wait her recovery, and were proceeding to urge the necessity there was for her to summon all her resolution at this important crisis—when Anna, sensible of what prudence, honour, and delicacy demanded, interrupted them—“Oh! say no more, I am better now, I will rise this moment—let them go—tell my aunt I am well, quite well; pray send directly.”——“Your recovery, my dear,” said Mrs. Wellers, “will appear a little too sudden; when Lady Edwin calls we will attribute your indisposition to a cold, and that may be represented as slight as you please; we will then leave to Mr. Mansel the uncertain life of Lord Sutton, to induce them to keep to their plan of leaving Bath, and I trust, when no longer harrassed by those continual interruptions, you will then be restored to the power of feeling that happiness in

"in your own bosom, your beneficent disposition
" leads you to extend to others."

Mr. Mansel's solicitude not being less, and his sentiments exactly those of Mrs. Wellers, he instantly went to Sir William Edwin's to begin his part of the business; here he met Mr. Wilkinson, who informed them the physicians had at a consultation that morning declared, they did not think it possible Lord Sutton could live a month; and though this was not told him, the very small hopes they gave rendered him very earnest to have the marriage over. Wilkinson ventured to hint a wish, that it might be concluded at Bath; Lady Edwin opposed it, and that very strenuously; she had her own private reasons for hastening the marriage of Cecilia, and foresaw if they stayed longer at Bath, that must of course be deferred; a thing of all others the least desirable to her. Charles Herbert sat a silent auditor of this conversation, in which Sir William and Mr. Mansel joined, giving it as their decided opinion, the union of Mr. Wilkinson and Miss Herbert ought on no account to be deferred. Mrs. Herbert considering the penitence of such a man as Lord Sutton might proceed more from caprice and terror of death, than any real good disposition, and consequently not to be depended on, was likewise an advocate for expediting the nuptials. Lady Anna's health was the only point that embarrassed her aunt: *that*, Mr. Mansel assured her was in no danger; and as she had the satisfaction of finding Anna up and chearful in the evening, she took a very affectionate leave, and the family set out the next morning for Wales. Neither Wilkinson nor Mansel went with them, Lord Sutton having peevishly lessened the leave of absence, from a fortnight to eight days; it was judged expedient for the family to go first, and that when all was ready, the bridegroom should, accompanied

accompanied by Mr. Mansel, follow them to Dennis Place.

Patty and her lover took leave of Anna in the evening; she rejoiced when she found they were actually gone, and a very acceptable cessation to her gloomy reflections arrived the next day in her uncle and Mr. Melmoth; Mrs. Melmoth's situation rendered it proper she should leave Bath; the Lodge was prepared for her reception; the tenants and dependants of that respectable family were impatient to hail the return of the Squire to the mansion of his ancestors—it was with regret on all sides this separation was consented to, and Mrs. Melmoth protested she could not stir till Lady Anna promised to see her before she went to Wales, which she very readily did.

Eliza continued with our heroine, and the Melmoth family left Bath with the happy certainty of entering gates they feared were for ever shut to their approach, of looking with conscious right and authority round those domains, the value and beauty of which had been disregarded by their possessors till the instant they were on the point of losing an earthly paradise by their own folly and extravagance; their pleasure and their joy was the more sensible, as they felt, in their present happiness, the reward of their former benevolence. Mr. Mor-dant, with whom justice and generosity were only so far divided as to suffer the former to precede the latter, had not only taken the mortgage out of Mr. Ashby's hands, but in a manner that flattered instead of wounding the pride of Mr. Melmoth, reimbursed him for the expences of Anna's education in so liberal a stile and manner, that plenty, as well as peace, again dwelt at Melmoth Lodge.

The young Eliza now became the particular care of Anna; Mr. Summers was her moral, and Mr. Mansel

Mr. Mansel her divine preceptor : in this pleasing employment Anna hoped to find relief from the corroding and anxious feelings of her mind ; but those were too potent to be thus evaded ; her fever increased, the intermissions became less regular, and her appetite entirely failed ; the hours usually devoted to sleep were those in which she indulged in a luxury of grief ; her sunk eyes and wan cheeks spoke a language it was not possible for love and friendship to misapprehend : the first physicians were again called in : Mr. Mordant's uneasiness was only to be equalled by that of the General ; Mansel durst not trust himself to look at her, and Mrs. Wellers' own health was so much affected, it was often out of her power to attend her young friend ; Mrs. Clarke was therefore sent for down express, and added another mourner to the melancholy group. Wilkinson was all impatience for his summons, but nevertheless felt in the general solicitude for a life so dear : the doctors were wearied with questions ; yet what answers could they return, consistent with the skill they professed, but what they had already given—that much might be hoped from her youth and constitution, but more, infinitely more, depended on the state of her mind.

Anna heard their opinions without emotion, but her countenance exhibited too little concern in their prognostics to please her uncle.

He conjured her not to break his heart by her unaccountable sadness : she averred, all that lay with herself was willingly done to regain her lost health ; “ but if,” said she, “ it is the will of my Maker to call me from a life, in which, except—
“ ing the love of a few friends, I have never
“ known pleasure, at so early a period, who shall
“ arraign his wisdom !

“ Oh

“Oh Anna!” answered Mr. Summers, “do you esteem the love of a few friends a trifle! Do not affect an apathy for which your sensibility disqualifies you! Believe, the love of real friends is Heaven’s best gift: it is a treasure far more valuable than your estate.”

“I esteem it so,” returned she, “my ever kind monitor; but, valuable as it is, call me not ungrateful: I had greedily set my heart on more; the disappointment, you see, has hurt me. I cannot fly from myself, else would I be any living being who is innocent, rather than Anna Trevanion; but unhappy as I confess I am, you, I am sure, alarm yourselves without reason. If this illness is to be final, it must greatly increase; I have myself no forebodings; my sufferings are merely mental; it may, perhaps, affect my health, but not, I hope, fatally; I have heard the South of France——.”

“Oh,” cried the General, “it is the very place for you.”

“And,” continued Anna, taking her uncle’s hand, which she pressed to her lips with the utmost warmth, both of duty and affection, “if that will not do, my dear and honoured uncle, we will go with you to Jamaica; and we will steal my good maternal friend from her worthy husband, if we cannot prevail on him to accompany us. What would I not do, where would I not go, to add to the happiness of such friends?—Let us instantly take an airing—Bristol is recommended; if the place pleases us, we will go there, just to beguile the time.—I cannot leave England without Mr. Mansel;—and if it should not be possible for my dear Mrs. Wellers to go;—

“Oh,” interrupted the good woman, “don’t mention that; depend upon it, I will not leave you, till your health is re-established, though I
“ am

“ am half an invalid myself.”—The carriage was ordered. Mr. Mordant and the General chose to go on horseback.—The environs of Bristol are, perhaps, the most beautiful and picturesque in the world. As they rode over the Downs, Mr. Mansel shewed them the Welch hills, over which they travel to Llandore.—Anna started.—

“ That high one that seems to lose its top in the clouds,” said the good man, “ is very plainly discernible from the ascent, at the back of Llandore castle ;”—a starting tear accompanied recollection.

He continued, “ Often, my dear Anna, have I looked from thence toward it, with a secret wish to know where you was, and a fervent hope you would once again repass it ; when the happiest among the happy, no wish ungratified, no prayer unanswered, carried down my departed saint, we went that road.

“ Oh, Sir !” answered Anna her face bathed in tears, while he strove to conceal his, “ no more lead to the memory of that blessed woman ; no more retrace that spot, those scenes ! which are closed on me for ever ; misery and despair are the only reliques of the peaceful serenity of four happy years spent at dear Llandore. Mrs. Mansel’s death anticipated misfortunes meant to elucidate the wisdom of Providence ; but there, alas ! my present sorrow did not originate ; too late were the warnings of my ever lamented friend. Your village, your house, the white chimnies of Llandore are this moment in my sight ; there you sit in your morning gown, reading ; here is my more than mother, trying on a pair of spectacles, laughing at her own figure in them : between you stands the happiest of orphans, just equipt to go with dear Miss Herbert to the castle, detained only to receive a charge,
N 5 “ delivered

“ delivered in the voice of kindness, not to be out late ; not to venture through farmer Jones’s field, and not to overheat myself in walking. Oh, that all my life had been passed in that humble stile ! ”—Here a flood of tears, in which her reverend friend accompanied her, gave some ease to her heart, bursting as it was with anguish, and the most tormenting recollections.

Mr. Mordant then joining them with his observations on the country, she was suffered to indulge in silence reflections which contributed not to the benefit she hoped from the air and exercise.

At Clifton, a remarkably pretty house, apparently new fitted up, in a romantic spot, overlooking the wells, in full view of the river and St. Vincent’s rock, engaged their notice, and Anna, much pleased with the situation, stopped to enquire what accommodation there was.

The ladies were shewn into a very neat drawing-room, while the gentlemen were admiring the prospects round ; on their proceeding to take a further view of the house, a person passed Anna hastily, who she immediately recollected to be Mrs. Hughes, the friendly widow to whose humanity she had been so much obliged in the small pox ; her first emotions were those of joy at seeing a person to whom she was so much indebted, and having no idea the woman could have any objection to a rencontre, which she predetermined should be to her advantage, she followed her up stairs into a small room, where to her astonishment, on a table lay the coat and train, of which she had been robbed, and which Mrs. Hughes was hastily catching up. Surprise now took the place of pleasure—might she believe her eyes—was it possible—could Mrs. Hughes be the person whose dishonesty caused her such sorrow ? The poor woman, when she saw Anna had fixed her eyes on the coat, dropped hers, in

in evident confusion ; neither spoke till joined by Mrs. Wellers.

Lady Anna's countenance, her astonished look at the coat so often described, soon explained the matter.

"What," cried Mrs. Wellers, "you have then discovered the thief."

Another person at this moment appeared as little expected, though perfectly known ; it was Bates ; who kneeling at the feet of Lady Anna, confessed the robbery, finding he could not conceal it without suffering the odium to lay on his sister.

The whole transaction reflected so much on the unhappy Edwin, that Anna was rejoiced there were no other witnesses to a discovery so little to his credit ; and the native goodness of her heart exulted to find, though so nearly related, Mrs. Hughes was unacquainted with the depravity of her brother.

Bates saved some money in Edwin's service, which he increased by marrying a woman of small dower, and had taken this house, which he meant to let in lodgings ; Mrs. Hughes was at that time on a visit to his wife, and they were very busy looking over and arranging his things, when Anna's carriage stopped ; Mrs. Bates attended the ladies to the apartments ; the first glance Bates had of our heroine, knowing how his wife and sister were employed, in the utmost hurry he sent the latter to put the fine coat and train they had been admiring, out of sight, without explaining his reason.

The lively gratitude of Anna prevented its being hid ; and her regard for Lady Edwin and the honour of her family, forbade her saying any thing more on the subject, than privately stipulating for its being restored to Mrs. Desmoulins, with which Bates was glad to come off.

This

This transaction prevented her taking the house; and after making Mrs. Hughes a present suitable to her own ideas of the services she had rendered her, they returned to Bath, amused if not diverted: here they found a chaise at the door, and Wilkinson impatiently waiting with the welcome mandate, and letters for Lady Anna from her friends at Dennis Place.

"Now, Anna," whispered Mrs. Wellers, "for your fortitude, *now* let your sense of propriety, the dignity of your rank, and the pride of your sex support you."

"I know," answered she, trembling and out of breath, "I shall be better when it is over;" she took the hand of Mansel as he passed, kissed hers to Wilkinson, and hurried to her apartment.

Mansel having been in daily expectation of his summons, was instantly ready, and with strict charge from Mrs. Wellers to send an express the moment the ceremony was performed, he took a reluctant leave.

C H A P. XCI.

The Wedding.

THE hard trial was now at hand; poor Anna, in this arduous moment, endeavoured to recollect all the lessons she had been taught for her own practice, and all she had observed in her friends: there was not, in her researches, a single example, from whence

whence she could derive strength of mind. **Philosophy** would not, and reflection could not; administer the consolation she so much wanted; to fly from her own thoughts was the only means that offered of comfort; in this expedient Mrs. Wellers was her indefatigable assistant: she hurried her from one amusement to another; still pointing out to her the admiration she excited, and the homage paid to her merit, as well as charms. Ever prudent, judicious, and kind, she neither a moment lost sight of what, at such a critical and painful period, was due to friendship, nor studiously avoided the subject, whenever Anna mentioned the Edwins, or Herbert; nevertheless, the intervening space would have been still more tedious and unhappy, had it not been diverted by incidents that engrossed some part of their attention.

Stevens called on Lady Anna the third morning after Mr. Wilkinson had left Bath, with a most terrible account of the state of Lord Sutton's mind and health; he acknowledged himself to have long been a member of the Catholic church, though he had not revealed those his religious principles, on account, for many years, of his commission, and lately he had not thought of any religion; but now the reproaches of his conscience were so strong, absolution must be had at any price; and nothing would satisfy him but sending for a priest, a countryman of his father's, now at Bath, in the train of a foreign ambassador.

Stevens, if he had not honesty enough to be really concerned for the interest of Wilkinson, had, at least, a competent share of regard for his own, which he conceived in a more promising line in the hands of a man of honour, than in that of a bigoted priest; he therefore intreated Lady Anna to interfere; but a look from her venerable friend had more force in her gentle bosom than all he could say;

say; even though the interest of Patty was at stake, she begged to be excused; and that no inducement might be wanting to the abandoning the bad man to his destiny, before Stevens left her, a poor woman sent a petition to be admitted.

At another time, perhaps, she might have been referred to Clarke; but as this, to divert the passing moment, was all that Mrs. Wellers wished; she therefore begged Lady Anna to admit her.

A tall, haggard, dirty woman now entered, of whose person Anna had not the least recollection; she was beginning in broken English an apology; when, seeing the Captain, her humble stile was instantly changed into a volley of abuse on him and his noble patron, in the course of which, our heroine understood, to her infinite surprise, this person was no other than Madame Frajan, and that the subject of her anger was not being rewarded suitable to her estimation of the services she had rendered Lord Sutton in her injurious conduct to Anna. In the course of her accusations, mixed with imprecations shocking to the ears of the respectable inmates of Lady Anna Trevanion's house, who, all but Stevens, stood aghast, she pourtrayed her own and the wickedness of her associate; he indeed, having been active in one part of what she called her ill usage, and more used to such language, knew how to return her dialect.

When, however, Mr. Mordant heard her accuse him of urging her to leave Miss Edwin's service, and receiving from her, in the name of his Lord, Mrs. Melmoth's lace, to prevent her obtaining her own pardon, by a free confession, he could hold no more, no more restrain his rage; the evident wretchedness of her circumstances lost all claim to charity, the iniquities of her life demanded punishment, and both these partners in vice were thrust

out

out of the house with the contempt and abhorrence they deserved.

When they retired to dress, Mrs. Wellers proposed to Anna going to the play, where the soul-harrowing Siddons was to perform *Isabella*. With a faint smile, she declined going out any more; this was, perhaps, the very last day she might think on her Herbert without a crime; the indissoluble knot might be already tied; she would spend it in once more living over in idea the happy, happy moments she had known with him; she would indulge, for the last time, in a retrospect of his actions, both at Llandore and since; she would learn fortitude from his example; she would trace with her pencil the graces of his person, as they dwelt on her memory, and her estimation of perfection should always be guided by those of his mind.

There was a solemnity in her manner during this declaration; and when she calmly opened her port folio, that affected Mrs. Wellers, without alarming her, she rang for her work bag, and sent an apology to the gentlemen for not joining them the remainder of the day.

The hours passed in a solemn kind of undescribable sadness, and the close of the day had already arrived, without the dreaded, yet wished-for messenger from Dennis Place.

Mr. Mordant and the General were gone to the play, and a stillness pervaded in the house, with which the feelings of its lovely mistress ill accorded; with each revolving hour her spirits flagged, and the remonstrances of friendship were lost in the most piercing claims of sensibility. She was in a silent flood of tears, when a loud rap at the door alarmed her.

She started.—“I will not see any body.”

“I have given directions,” answered Mrs. Wellers—The door opened.

With

With looks of transport, and unspeakable joy, in rushed Mr. Herbert.

The ladies screamed.

He was in a moment at the feet of Anna. He seized her hand, it was in vain she struggled to withdraw it, that she commanded him to rise—to retire.

Never, never more would he give up the precious pledge.—She was his own—his invaluable, his destined Anna.

What did he mean?—Again he was commanded to retire.

No longer the despairing, the hapless Herbert—he dared to disobey, and to glory in his disobedience. He would not quit his posture till he read in the eyes of his beloved Anna the joy, the ecstasy himself felt at his freedom; had she not confessed she loved her Herbert? He was again, he assured her, free. She must forgive his transports; the sound was so joyful, he would have it resound through the world, “Charles Herbert was disengaged from Cecilia Edwin—He was in sight of all earthly bliss,—he was at liberty to pour forth the long, long restrained love and adoration of his soul;—he was at the feet of Anna Trevanion.”

“There,” said he, with the triumph of truth in his countenance, and ecstasy in his manner, “is the dear mandate of bliss”—giving into the hands of Mrs. Wellers an open letter, while his full heart shewn in his fine eyes, and he was unable to utter another syllable—but his silence wanted not animation: the honest joy of his fond heart bathed the hand he held with drops of love and rapture—his agitations were too strong for articulation, and he indulged the transport of reading in the countenance of her he loved, a doubtful joy mixed with evident surprise.

Herbert's

Herbert's positive declaration of freedom carried too much the semblance of truth to be doubted ; but how could it be—nothing, Anna thought, but the death of Cecilia could have given him authority to address her with such assured hope of success, and that idea shocked her—he was bid to rise—he was disobedient—he would not stir.

“ Have you read that divine letter, madam,” said he, addressing himself to Mrs. Wellers, “ from the kind Cecilia Edwin ?”

“ Ah ! Charles,” cried Anna, “ what have you done ? Have you then humbled me to the dust by revealing my folly to her ? And do you think I will accept of a dismissal you have prevailed on her to give ? Was I so groveling in my ideas, so mean in my principles, how would *that* reconcile your conduct to Sir William and Lady Edwin, to yourself, to me, and to the world ?”

“ Oh ! to be sure, my angel,” answered Herbert, “ Cecilia Edwin is the woman to give up a point in consideration of another's happiness, and your Charles the man in the world to afford her a triumph over his Anna. But Mrs. Wellers, though by your delighted looks I perceive you have read those celestial lines, on each syllable of which I have hung with inexpressible transport, you do not congratulate me ; you have not communicated them to my Anna. Will you be so good as to read it out or shall I ?”

“ Oh ! pray take it yourself,” answered the good woman, smiling through her tears, and folding her young friend to her heart, with an emotion she could not resist, though her sense of female delicacy kept her silent.

“ Now, Madam,” said the intoxicated Charles, “ let me read to you a letter I have gone through a thousand times already ; there is not a sentence
“ in

“ in it I have not separately blessed over and over.”

He was beginning—but the agitation of our heroine became too strong to suffer him to proceed. Mrs. Wellers, alarmed at the changes in her countenance, begged him to retire, and leave the letters with her. He was unwilling to obey ;—but on her referring him to the looks of Anna as a confirmation of her ill health, and on promise of re-admission, he left the room, and then no witness present, the amiable woman alternately soothed and congratulated her friend ; and the absence of the lover, by leaving them without constraint, soon gave Anna courage to read as follows :

TO CHARLES HERBERT, Esq.

“ And did you really suppose, cousin, Cecilia Edwin meant to make you master of her person and fortune ? Only one motive could have prevailed on her to have been guilty of such a preposterous piece of folly—that of punishing your presumption, and of being a perpetual plague to the whining love-sick Anna. But it would have been too much to dedicate my life to such a contemptible purpose. When next I see you, I shall bear the name of him who has my heart ; and of this I should have informed you when you insulted me with a petition to be rejected, had not your insolence deserved the punishment of suspense.

C. EDWIN.

“ If” said she faintly, “ this is true ! if—~~but~~”
 “ Oh ! no if’s for God’s sake,” answered Mrs. Wellers, “ I must perform my promise, Mr. Herbert

“Herbert must sup with us.”—Not forbid by the blushing Anna he was re-admitted.

Can language of any kind do justice to the felicity of this happy evening, when two amiable young persons found (without any reproachable effort of their own) the hitherto unfurmountable bars which opposed their union, totally removed; unrestrained by a sense of impropriety, unawed by fear, unconscious of guilt, blessed with affluence beyond their wishes, when fate, which had so long and invariably followed them with omens of their eternal separation, now relenting presented to their view uninterrupted peace and endless happiness: if there is a language adequate to a description of the raptures of two sensible minds so situated, I am unacquainted with it. Sacred be their loves, as void of guilt their sorrows.

They parted not till two o'clock, and then too happy to rest: but how different may be the effects from one cause; the want of sleep left no visible traces on the countenance of our heroine; she was indeed in no haste to leave her apartment, but Mrs. Wellers, whose pleasure was without bounds, found her dressed, sweet as the opening rose, her muslin levet and linen only to be outdone in whiteness by the skin they covered. Joy danced in her eyes, and her beautiful mouth now adorned with the smile of tranquillity, half shewed a double row of pearl, and exhibited to the most enchanting advantage the innumerable dimples which surrounded it. The visible satisfaction this lively display of inward peace gave Mrs. Wellers, added fresh grace to her smiles; and returning her silent salute with mutual exchanges of those looks true cordiality only can send forth, they descended to the breakfast room.

The General and Mr. Mordant had been fixing their route to France, and seriously lamenting the occasion

occasion which obliged them to take it, when Mr. Herbert was announced.

"Herbert!" repeated Mr. Mordant in astonishment.

"The same, dear Sir," answered the still overjoyed Charles; "he comes to demand your congratulations."

"On your marriage to be sure," answered Mr. Mordant; "but what can have brought you so soon to Bath; is Mrs. Herbert with you? Is Wilkinon come?"

"Not so fast, my dear Sir," returned Herbert. "No, you are, if you please, to congratulate me on my *not* being married; and—"

Here, Mrs. Wellers, who had gone to fetch Anna, entered, followed by the divinity he adored;—he flew to meet her.

"Hey!" said the General, the whole matter then striking him, "So, so, so, you have found a physician, and we shall have no occasion to go to France."

"Nor will my dear niece, I fear, follow me to Jamaica," joined Mr. Mordant.

Anna curtsied to both, and answered her lover's fond inquiries after her health with grace and ease.

When they were seated, she told him he should have the honor of giving the water to Mrs. Wellers; and the servant being dismissed, conscious of the rectitude of her sentiments, and as free from all affectation, as incapable of deceit; above the little arts which women, who feel a void of real modesty, by overstraining the appearance of that beautiful quality, have recourse to, in vain hope of concealing their unamiable deficiency, her understanding sat sheepishness out of her character, and her native dignity secured her from the censure of boldness, possessing the happy medium in every instance but one; it was consistent with her ideas of grateful propriety,

propriety, to make a frank acknowledgment to her friends of those sentiments she had not concealed from her lover.

After a little hesitation, in which sensibility was far more visible than shame, she owned her predilection for Mr. Herbert from the first of her acquaintance ; the progress it had made in her affection, had been, she said, as irresistible as rapid ; she mentioned him to Mr. Mordant as the cause of her declining the addresses of his amiable son ; nor could she restrain her tears in repeating her sufferings at supposing him dead from the accidental information of the magazine ; her distress when the same moment that discovered his existence gave her such undoubted proofs of his engagement to Miss Edwin, it was unnecessary to repeat ; but she concluded with assuring them, if it yet should appear to her uncle and Mr. Summers, that her sentiments in Mr. Herbert's favour were the effect of caprice or want of judgment in her, instead of desert in him, she could not indeed promise to cease loving him, but would never marry without not only their consent but approbation ; and then leaving him to the explanation and vindication of his own actions, she retired, declining the attendance of Mrs. Wellers. " You, my dear Madam," said she, " must stay— you shall judge for me, I am too partial to decide for myself."

Herbert, all sense and elegance, liberal in his ideas, and just in his actions, a scholar and a gentleman, his principles unvitiated, his morals uncorrupted, not warmer in his sense of honour than in his love of truth, needed not an advocate with his judges ; they saw Anna's partiality, they approved the object which inspired it, and only wondered any one who knew both could think of separating two people who seemed born for each other.

C H A P. XCII.

A Trip to the North.

MR. Herbert had now to account to them ; he had before done it to Anna, for his sudden enfranchisement.

He told them, that the whole journey down, Miss Edwin's behaviour was fullen, haughty, and reserved to all the party ; her supercilious behaviour knew no distinction of persons, but was extended to her father and mother, with as little ceremony as to Patty and himself ; insomuch that Lady Edwin, it was easy to perceive, with great difficulty forbore her resentment. On their arrival at Dennis Place, she effected retirement, but made no objection to the day proposed for their nuptials ; that as to himself, spite of his internal wretchedness, he endeavoured to persevere in the kind of behaviour he had always adopted, which was polite and friendly ; he had pretended to no more. To the great diversion of Sir William, and the surprise of every body else, their aunt Winifred, formerly her ridicule, was her favourite friend and chief companion, and the only person about the house with whom she chose to converse.

On the evening preceding their nuptials, which was the day Mr. Mansel and Wilkinson were expected, the old chapel being cleared and ornamented for the purpose, the neighbourhood invited, and preparations made to entertain the whole county,

county, Cecilia, without waiting to see them, retired to her apartment.

Lady Edwin was surpris'd and hurt at such a whim, as Patty (though going to be united to the object of her choice) having been brought down for the exprefs purpose of accompanying her cousin, would certainly, at such a delicate period, wish for a companion of her own age and sex ; but remonstrances were vain, she continued obstinate, and carried her point.

“ Mansel and Wilkinson arrived in the evening.
“ A prey to my own dreadful reflections, I had
“ not,” he continued, a thought of rest ; but I
“ attended my dear mother early to her chamber,
“ when, for the first time, she hinted her fears,
“ I was not happy in *my*, or rather *her*, choice.

“ I made no answer to this but too true surmise ;
“ little did the best and tenderest of mothers imagine *who* reigned without a rival in my soul : had
“ she but suspected I loved, her sense of honour
“ and of justice would have rendered her miserable ; but as no remedy offered to prevent this
“ dreadful sacrifice but what would involve her in
“ my ruin, and wound the hearts of Sir William
“ and Lady Edwin, I suffered her to continue
“ in ignorance of my feelings—Dear woman, on
“ her knees she prayed for blessings on her children.

“ She was sure I might mould my cousin, who
“ had always loved me, into what form I pleas'd ;
“ and the gratitude and good nature her partiality
“ gave me credit for, would insure our happiness ;
“ I left her, extremely affected by her maternal
“ goodness, my soul rent with the idea of the approaching ceremony, which I felt would render
“ the whole creation an universal blank to me. In
“ crossing the gallery, I was struck with a glimpse
“ of Cecilia hastily descending the stairs ; but as
“ every

“ every hour was marked with fresh whim and caprice, when I was sure it was her, it gave me no farther thought.

“ What my reflections were during that painful night I will not, (since, thank God ! it is past) repeat : I can only attempt to expiate my offence to Heaven by confessing, such were my sorrows, I found it impossible to rest, and therefore went not to bed. Every revolving moment, while recollection brought to my memory all the past, at the same instant reminding me how soon, how very soon by a voluntary act of my own, I must for ever relinquish all claim on the woman I adored, and plight my faith to one I despised, my distress became so poignant, I own it with shame, I am not sure but my mother’s heart would have been wounded by a second suicide in my family, had not the fatal engagement been so happily broke off. The distraction of my ideas was increased by the bustle and hurry which, by break of day filled the house ; and before six, by the sight of my meek sister hanging on the arm of her beloved Wilkinson, whose looks bent in cordial love, even at that distance, conveyed to me a picture of the rapture of his mind : I was turning from them, my imagination sickening at the contrast in my own situation, when a fresh commotion in the house, and Patty’s hasty summons from the garden, excited for a moment my curiosity, which, however, quickly vanished : too miserable to fear an aggravation of *that*, I was again lost in despair ; I had nothing, I thought, to fear, and less to hope, from whatever might be going forward : happy mistake ! My mother and Lady Edwin entered my room ; the former with looks of compassion, the latter deprived by anger and distress, of the power of utterance, pale, and shaking every nerve.

“ My

“ My dear son,” said my mother, “ you must arm yourself with patience.”

“ Ah ! what has happened !” cried I, concluding (my mind ever on *one* subject) some dreadful news from Bath.

“ Lady Edwin, then in agony, found speech ; Cecilia, said she, that disgrace to my blood, that dishonour to my race, has eloped : all my care for her is lost, all my solicitude vain—my anxious hours, my sleepless nights, my ardent prayers, of no effect—unhappy woman that I am—the distress of my poor brother is visited on my devoted head—childless and wretched, for never will I own to receive that ill-principled girl—I have no hope or comfort in my own posterity.

“ My respect for Lady Edwin, my veneration of her sorrows, nor compassion for my uncle, who ran about wringing his hands, and vainly calling on his beloved ungrateful daughter, had power to rein in my joy, which actually had near suffocated me ; when Wilkinson and Mansel came to us, the former pressed my hand with a fervency that could have but one meaning—it brought the blood into my cheeks—Mansel, good venerable man—never shall I forget his looks, they were rhetoric itself—The next inquiry was for aunt Win. ; she was not to be found. Presently Miss Edwin’s maid, a prudent woman, placed about her by her mother, brought in two letters left on Cecilia’s writing stand ; mine you have seen : what Lady Edwin’s was, I am yet to learn—News was that instant brought that two persons had been seen in the neighbourhood, plainly dressed, but well mounted, that aunt Win. had met them several times ; and a farmer whose stay at the next village had been protracted by his falling asleep in a state of intoxication, saw, as he passed the avenue to Dennis

“ Place, a chaise and four drive out very furiously,
“ and said he was sure Madam Winifred was in it,
“ for he heard her scold the driver for not stopping
“ to pick up her bonnet, which by some accident
“ had fallen out of the chaise window, and which
“ he took up ; he said they were followed by two
“ or three men on horseback.

“ I heard no more—I flew to the stable—my
“ horse was one fit to answer the impatience of his
“ rider—when I could no longer outstrip the wind,
“ I threw myself into a post-chaise, and, without
“ stopping, was in fifteen hours at the feet of my
“ lovely Anna.”

On this little history Mr. Herbert received the congratulations of all present—happiness now resumed her proper seat, the habitation of virtue was no longer clouded with grief ; and those hearts where philanthropy and benevolence ever dwelt, became the seat of peace.

That peace was not interrupted, though their attention was engaged in the evening by an account from Sutton house, of the death (as he was taking his tea) of its owner. This event, though expected by the faculty, was too sudden not to shock Lady Anna Trevanion.

Mr. Mordant, with Mr. Herbert, on behalf of Mr. Wilkinson, instantly repaired there to put their respective seals on the effects, and sent off an express to Dennis Place.

The confusion and distress at Dennis Place did not take from Wilkinson the desire of insuring his own happiness ; Sir William wished to pursue the fugitives, but Mr. Wilkinson would not accompany him till he was actually married, lest one delay might be productive of others ; they were therefore united. The poor, Lady Edwin said, should not suffer for the folly and disobedience of Cecilia ; the intended gifts were dispensed ; and the common people

people regaled, though apologies were dispatched to the gentry who had been invited.

From the chapel door, Sir William and Mr. Wilkinſon ſet out on their purſuit, which they delayed with the more patience on the ſide of the baronet, as he had no doubt but Herbert was ſet off on the ſame errand; they eaſily traced the chaiſe to Glouceſter, where, not more to their ſurpriſe than her mortification, they encountered one of the run-aways, juſt as ſhe was getting into a poſt-chaiſe.

Miſs Winifred Edwin was in the greateſt diſtreſs, and at the ſight of Sir William her grief became vociferous; ſhe railed againſt the deceit and ingratitude of the world to that brother towards whom ſhe had been ſo lately guilty of both; they gathered from her exclamations, that the journey to the north was too far advanced for their utmoſt efforts to impede or overtake; indeed this venerable maiden had been very cruelly treated by her niece; for, taking advantage of her loving diſpoſition, Captain Dunbar was accompanied in his perambulations about Dennis Place by a very handſome friend, who was exceedingly ſmitten with aunt Winny, and prevailed on her to conſent to the Captain's carrying off Cecilia, merely by way of companion to herſelf, as he proteſted he could not exiſt without being united to her, and promiſed to meet them at Glouceſter; he was true to his appointment as to time and place, but was unluckily accompanied by a lady who made up the party *quarré* without Miſs Win. and totally deſtroyed the ſanguine hopes that poor body had entertained of entering the holy ſtate of matrimony. This unwelcome intruder was Mrs. Edwin; the two ladies were overjoyed at meeting in ſuch happy circumſtances, and the diſappointed maiden had the mortification of ſeeing herſelf deprived of her lover, ridiculed by her thoughtleſs niece, laughed at by

the company, and left alone in a strange place, the gentlemen not chusing to lose a moment in carrying off their golden prizes.

Poor Winifred, afraid to face her justly enraged sister-in-law, had been in the greatest dilemma where to bestow her sweet person; Mrs. Jane Mansel was recollected as her only asylum, and she was on the point of setting out for Llandore, when an end was put to that scheme by the arrival of her brother, who, much against her inclination, obliged her to return to Dennis Place to render an account of the whole intrigue.

Sir William, finding they had so many hours start of him, and that the person his daughter had fixed on was really a gentleman, wisely resolved to follow her no farther, but leave her to the fate she chose in preference to his advice, not doubting but as she was wholly dependent on him, he should very soon hear of or from her, and returned with Miss Winifred.

In the mean while Mrs. Herbert was in a thousand apprehensions for her son, which increased very much at the return of Sir William and Mr. Wilkinfon, as she, having no doubt but he was in pursuit of Cecilia, expected they would return together. Mr. Mansel, in compassion to her maternal distress which she could not conceal, gave it as his opinion, that her son was gone a very different road, and he would venture to promise her news of him as soon as he reached Bath.

Mr. Mordant's express arrived in half an hour after Mr. Wilkinfon's return, who, leaving his bride to the care of their reverend friend to follow in their own chaise, set out by the quickest conveyance.

C H A P. XCIII.

A Disappointment.

ON Mr. Wilkinson's arrival at Bath, he was pleased but not surprised, to meet Herbert, who accompanied him to Sutton house; they were there much struck to find the seals of two foreign noblemen affixed to the drawers and cabinets in addition to their own; and Stevens, who was yet there, informed them an old Priest, who was high in Lord Sutton's confidence, had set out for the Continent the instant he died.

The two Noblemen, who were at Bath, attended, on being sent for; they were men of high rank, and unimpeached honour; and every suspicion of foul play was obviated by their respectable characters. On opening the deceased's private cabinet, the first thing they found was a will, legally signed and attested, giving the whole of his fortune, without a single legacy, to the two foreigners, for uses which he had explained to them, and forbidding the calling to any account the priest his confessor, as what sum he might have in his possession was a voluntary gift.

The surprize, and indeed the disappointment of young Wilkinson and his friends at this stroke, is not to be expressed; the two Counts said, the bequest to them was so sacred, and witnessed by the priest, it was impossible for them either to explain it or give up an article of the assets.

Stevens,

Stevens, who had hoped for an annuity, now petitioned for his expences to town, and was bid not only to expect that, but to make a charge of his attendance, both which they would pay; and Mr. Wilkinfon having promised to take care of Villars, he and his friend returned in dismay and astonishment to Lady Anna's.

They were not received with less cordiality for this blow; the General, who had hitherto avoided young Wilkinfon, embraced and comforted him, by the assurance, that the money so vilely got would never have worn well; and after the first shock, the disappointment was forgot in the reflection, that whatever happened, his Patty was taken care of; and, said Anna, my dear girls have their 5000*l.* safe.

"Believe me," answered Mr. Summers, "it is all for the best; would you have had the wretch finish his corrupt career with an act of justice?" "I confess my hatred of him is gratified in this last piece of deceit; I have no doubt but the artful priest, having received his confession, made the whole of his fortune the price of his absolution, and cunningly suspecting the interference of the legislature, on taking such immense property out of the kingdom, prevailed on him to make those noblemen his heirs under restrictions they will not dare to break in a Catholic country."

Wilkinfon put on mourning, but declined attending the funeral; and Mrs. Wilkinfon was received by her fond husband at Lady Anna's, instead of Sutton house.

On entering the drawing-room, how was the bride amazed to see her lost brother, one arm round the waist of Anna, the other holding a Milton out of which he was repeating that beautiful passage,

"With thee conversing, I forgot all time,

"All seasons and their change, &c. &c."

"My

“ My Anna—my dear, dear Charles, is this possible ! oh, Lady Anna,” said the mild Patty, falling at her feet, with an involuntary motion, “ Is this true ? and will—yes I know you will—for who but you can reward a son, a brother, whose duty, and whose fraternal love could prevail on him to take misery to his bosom ? ”

Mr. Mansel entered as the lovely sisters were embracing ; the good man could not speak ; he blessed, he could only bless his Anna.

As soon as a tranquil certainty of her brother's and her friends happiness would permit her, Mrs. Wilkinson informed them she had left her mother to comfort Lady Edwin, who mourned, with a broken spirit, the depravity of her children ; but still, as she avowed indulging a pleasing hope that the honour of her house would yet be preserved by its lineal representative, and ascribing the disappointment of her wishes in her own offspring to the cruelty shewn her brother ; Sir William had already resumed the hospitable plan of living he delighted in ; and Mrs. Wilkinson, in the tenderness of her husband, soon forgot her reluctance at parting with her friends at Dennis Place ; as to Lord Sutton's fortune, she gave it not a second thought.

Mr. Mansel having delivered a packet with which he was charged, from Lady Edwin to Anna, she retired to read it, leaving the brother and sister to their mutual explanation ; it contained as follows :

“ MY DEAREST NIECE,

“ THE disgraceful event in my family, of which your friends will inform you, would I am sure have drawn to me my only remaining comfort, without my asking it ; but I have many things

“ to say and to explain, too mortifying for personal communication, though into the bosom of candour itself.

“ Will, therefore, my dear niece forgive her unhappy aunt, for troubling her with repetitions of family grievances and disgrace, for having the fond vanity of believing her advice and request will be more regarded by the daughter of her brother, than by her whose maturity has never afforded her mother one pleasurable idea ?

“ The name which you, my dear Anna, bear, in a long line of illustrious ancestors, has never been dishonoured by the slightest tarnish, that only one received by my brother Hugh’s uniting himself with a plebeian, being entirely done away by the native dignity of his daughter ; in you the virtue, as well as honour, of our house is united ; that is indeed the consolation of my soul under the affliction it has pleased God to send me.

“ At the discovery of my son’s attachment to you, which was at the instant of that villainous Lord’s contrivance to charge you with vices so indignant to your noble blood, my own conviction told me how little the hope was of driving you from his heart by such a substitute as Miss Turbville.

“ But, anxious to unite our children to those whose birth and family would not disgrace our own, our words were engaged for our son, before Mr. Turbville died—from that there was no receding, even if the discovery of your birth had preceded his marriage. So you see that the steps human wisdom pointed out, as the only means of preserving the dignity of our family, was productive of its debasement. Had our son been left to his own choice, he would have
“ made

“ made the right election; guided by us, he met
“ destruction.

“ Our daughter, undone by our indulgence,
“ became the slave of dissipation, the child of fol-
“ ly; unrestrained by her parents, how could she
“ be expected to restrain herself? Our mistaken
“ generosity, operating with a weak head and
“ bad heart, soon robbed her of the chief
“ ornament of her sex; her person, from its con-
“ stant exhibition, became contemptible; and her
“ character suspected; instead of the proposals her
“ rank and fortune intitled her to, we had the
“ mortification to hear her conquests were
“ among the necessitous and unworthy; our
“ son, cut off in the thoughtless career of extra-
“ vagant youth, his talents, which under the
“ guide of discretion, might have been of use
“ and ornament to his country, as well as ho-
“ nour to his family, for ever lost to both, we be-
“ came the more serious in our concern for Cecilia.

“ We flattered ourselves she had always been
“ attached to her cousin Charles; but we were so
“ unhappy as to discover, at a very, if not too
“ late period, an imprudent connection, which,
“ however, (as in that moment she met our wishes
“ in avowing an unabated love for Herbert) we
“ were eager to hope might be merely the effect
“ of levity; I therefore proposed to Mrs. Herbert
“ the immediate match we had always in view,
“ between her son and my daughter.

“ I saw, I confess to you, Lady Anna, the
“ young man accorded to our measures with no
“ impression in Miss Edwin's favour, except ho-
“ nour and gratitude; but those were principles
“ on which I built stronger for indulgence, and in
“ consequence a permanent reformation in Cecilia,
“ than on mere passion. I knew our love and li-
“ berality would be united to his fortune, for our
“ general

“ general happiness; and on those grounds, I had
 “ the cruelty to persist in what I had too many
 “ reasons to know the heart of the amiable
 “ youth recoiled at, because no other plan oc-
 “ curred that gave the most distant hope of pre-
 “ serving what was left of the honour of my pos-
 “ terity.

“ This selfish conduct met its reward in a to-
 “ tal disappointment, by the elopement of my
 “ daughter.

“ I inclose you her letter—read it here, Lady
 “ Anna, by way of support to the request I am
 “ going to make, that compassion for my feelings
 “ may be added to the sense of what you owe the
 “ family you solely represent, to prevail on you to
 “ take the only step, that will enable me again to
 “ meet the eyes of my countrymen.

“ You must bring to Trevanion House a chief
 “ worthy of such vassals.

“ You are rich enough in your own right, to
 “ chuse, even among the indigent, a person you
 “ can love; nevertheless, as the affections of one
 “ so unfortunately situated, though for Lady Anna
 “ Trevanion, will appear in a more questionable
 “ light, than that of a man, who possesses in his
 “ own fortune, a right to chuse,—the least to be
 “ suspected is the last.

“ But I pretend not to dictate; all I ask of you
 “ is to marry with condition, that the happy ob-
 “ ject of your choice shall change his name to that
 “ of Trevanion; at the same time taking care,
 “ that the one he gives up, is equally respecta-
 “ ble—on this, my dear niece, hang all my pre-
 “ sent hopes; tell me you will oblige, and render
 “ happy,

“ Your distressed Aunt,
 “ C. EDWIN.”

To

To Lady E D W I N.

(*Inclosed in the foregoing.*)

“ Madam,

“ AS this is the last imprudence Cecilia Edwin
“ can be guilty of, I entreat my papa’s and your
“ pardon for it. I leave my family at a critical
“ time to them, as well as myself; the truth is,
“ our blood has from generation to generation,
“ by flowing in the same regular channel, at last
“ wearied itself by its own sameness, and Mr.
“ Dunbar assures me, *his* is no less respecta-
“ ble; so that a little change, will be an advan-
“ tage to both; I hope, therefore, on reflec-
“ tion, you will forgive the act on account of the
“ motive.

“ Your dutiful daughter,

“ C. E D W I N.”

Anna read the packet with different emotions. Lady Edwin had but one fault, if her bigoted regard to the honour of her family could be so called. She was a woman, whose practice of every noble principle sanctified her pride of blood; and the calamities of her domestic circle were the more humiliating, as conscious of no one deviation from the virtue of her ancestors herself, in thought or act, she was the farther from apprehending it in her children, till conviction accompanied the certainty of interference being now too late; the blood of Trevanion, she thought, would secure them equally from vice and meanness; the max-
ims

ims and greatness of soul she had derived from her father, had been carefully delivered to her children; forgetting it was in the family mansion, and its environs only, they had been preserved unfulled, and that the great world was too crowded with artificial virtues, to give place to real ones; not aware the example from the multitude was far more prevalent on the minds of prosperous youth, than the dry precepts of individuals, her grief was too respectable, her disappointment too keen, to be disregarded by her niece. The request of Lady Edwin pictured the amiable Charles; Sir William's estate was entailed on him in default of male issue; his family was as ancient and respectable as that of Trevanion, of which indeed it was a branch: his name, dishonoured by his father's unhappy end, would be of less consequence in its change, as that of Trevanion had been the one from which his family sprung.

Thus, then, the man of her choice was him most suitable to her situation; but whether, after being so circumstanced with Cecilia, Lady Edwin might approve their union, was doubtful.

C H A P. XCIV.

Conclusion.

AT Lady Anna's return to the company, her looks were examined by her fond Herbert; he read in them an anxiety he was impatient to remove; and, at his earnest request, she gave her aunt's letter into the hands of Mr. Mordant—the contents were highly pleasing to that gentleman. Having obtained her permission, he set off the next morning for Dennis Place, accompanied by Mr. Herbert. Soon did that happy lover return to escort his beloved and her friends to Lady Edwin; and the real heiress of Trevanion was met by the tenants and vassals of her estate, and followed through two counties by the acclamations and unfeigned joy of the honest, unconquered, though uncultivated Cambrians.

Sir William and Lady Edwin, equally gratified, and mutually happy in the union of their amiable nephew and niece, resigned themselves to the will of heaven in the disposal of their children, and felt nothing but joy in the more fortunate lot of their next dear relatives.

Mrs. Herbert—but why need I speak of her, when I have yet to say, her son was the happiest of men, and her daughter the most contented of women, could the remainder of her life then be other than one scene of devout transport and grateful joy? In her afflictions, she was respected; and in her prosperity, deservedly beloved.

As

As soon as the writings were ready, and the forms gone through on account of the change of name, to which was annexed the family honours, the voluntary favour, it was said, of a Prince, whose great misfortune it is, that his own judgment is too seldom a recommendation to the dignity he bestows, the Earl and Countess of Trevanion were publicly united in the family chapel.

The noble heiress soon became the idol of her country; and Lady Edwin exulted in the revival of her family dignity.

Miss Edwin, now Mrs. Dunbar, in a very short time, became a petitioner, and obtained a pardon, which ever preceded asking in the heart of her fond father; and Captain Dunbar being second son to an Irish peer, Lady Edwin condescended to receive him, and consented to the establishment of her daughter on the most liberal and generous plan. The ladies were both returned with their husbands to Portman Square, from whence Mrs. Dunbar removed, as soon as Sir William's remittance enabled her. To this step indeed she was rather precipitated by the hurry Mr. Mellish was in to visit his lady's seat in Shropshire; whither he had not the good-nature towards his wife, or the politeness to her friend, to invite her.

Captain Dunbar was wild and dissipated; he soon ran out the first sum advanced by his father-in-law; and another was asked, and granted, but his demands increasing with the generosity of the noble-spirited baronet, he at last thought proper to restrain a bounty, that must in the end injure instead of serving his daughter, more especially as her pregnancy was announced.

Sir William Edwin was good nature and liberality itself, till he suspected an imposition; but when once he saw a mean advantage was taken of his open temper, he instantly turned to the other extreme,

treme, and was as obstinately impenetrable to such applications, as he had before been generous and complying.

Captain Dunbar, young, thoughtless, and extravagant, was soon weary of a contracted income and an expensive wife; and finding himself too idle to reform, or lessen his expences, he privately exchanged for advanced rank in the West Indies, and left his lady to take her own methods with her relations.

The young and lovely Countess of Trevanion, no less respected than admired in the great world, and beloved and adored in her own county and connections; and her husband not more dignified by his rank and abilities, than esteemed for the rectitude of his principles and the benignity of his disposition; were objects too galling for Mrs. Dunbar to meet in her present circumstances---while, therefore, she waited the determination of her parents, refusing the offered asylum at Dennis Place, she chose to ask one with Mrs. Mellish in Shropshire; but that partner in her imprudence had not power to give the welcome she expected.

Captain Mellish, when he took his lady into the country, had no intentions to return, and much less to suffer her to keep up any of her connections; the situation of his lady was no less unpleasantly altered, though in a different manner, than that of her friend; for Captain Mellish was, in the other extreme, as penurious as Dunbar was extravagant; and as Mrs. Mellish did not breed, all his intention was towards saving out of her income what, in case of her death, would console him for her estate, which, if she died childless, was settled on the next heir, then abroad: here then was no place for Mrs. Dunbar; who returned to London in high dudgeon with her friend Mellish.

Mrs. Mel-

Mrs. Mellish, on her part, thus cut off from all that she had been used to esteem valuable in life, stinted in every article of expence, even to common necessaries, shut out from the pleasures of amusement, and debarred of the joys of society, took to the only method that could punish the contracted vice of her husband, by depriving him of her income; she gave herself up to drinking cordials and strong waters when she could procure them, and when she could not, drams and liquors of a more vulgar kind were substituted in their stead. Her health soon became affected by this fatal resource. Mellish destitute of feeling and good nature, was equally callous to reproach, and regardless of her complaints, till seriously alarmed at the danger in which she soon was, the avarice which had destroyed, fought to preserve her existence. How could he bear to part with a wife, whose death would deprive him of such a fortune? With anxious wishes for her recovery, her emaciated body was vainly moved from place to place, at the direction of the doctors, who were promised mountains if she recovered. She fell an early victim to her own unguarded folly, and his unfeeling avarice.

Mrs. Dunbar continuing obstinate in her refusals to return to Wales, her parents were at last prevailed on to allow her a handsome annuity; and Lady Edwin took into her own care the child. She was very happy to be eased of the trouble of bringing it up. It was a female, and named after herself.

Thus once more in possession of the means of living in rank, her house was crowded, as her doors were opened to that kind of indiscriminate company which would disgrace a private party, but which were of a certain set, and therefore not wholly contemptible. With great cunning she soon acquired some experience, and blending one with

with the other, had the dexterity to make the junction pass for wit. She was yet young, genteel, and had not a bad face; was cautious, but not suspected of prudery; in short, she maintained a kind of doubtful character, too suspicious for the pure unfulfilled soul of innocence, and too guarded for the positive stamp of guilt.

Mr. Wilkinson and his lovely bride retired, contented with their lot, to Llandore, where Mrs. Herbert's home was, though her frequent excursions to her son's almost rendered it merely nominal. The prosperous state of the iron works was a mine of riches more acceptable, and far more honourable, than that they had missed in Sutton's wealth. The provision Mr. Wilkinson promised Villars, was supplied by Mr. Summers, who was of such a preposterous turn, that he fancied even she, in comparison of some part of the world, might be virtuous; at least, he would preserve her from the temptations to guilt; an act of humanity he did not live to repent. The remainder of his days, which were spent at Trevanion House, were unruffled by a single grief, and uninterrupted by care, he finished his life in the arms of the young Earl, and his change from this world, to that he had been long prepared to enter, was unmarked by one groan, or rendered shocking to his friends by one convulsive struggle; the placid smile of true benevolence dwelt on his features after life had ceased to animate them. The bulk of his fortune he left to the Countess and her children, with handsome legacies to those of Mr. Wilkinson.

Mrs. Wellers left Lady Trevanion but for a short period; she had the misfortune to lose her valuable husband soon after her return to Layton; and the grateful heart she had so often soothed, would not suffer her to feel sorrow alone; Lord Trevanion himself fetched her to his beloved Anna, whose
then

then situation would not admit of her travelling; and the good woman experienced the regard of her noble friends, in the confidence the whole family reposed in her son. All their money concerns were intrusted to Mr. Wellers; a circumstance however of equal advantage to both parties; since the large sums constantly in his hands, could not be more profitable to him, as a speculative man, than his strict probity and exact honesty, as well as invariable regularity, was to them.

Eliza Melmoth continued to receive the advantage of the instructions and example of Lady Trevanion, till she entered her seventeenth year, when she gave her hand to young Mordant, who, on that occasion, with his father, settled in their native country.

Lady Cecilia, gratified in her family pride, was wholly wrapped up in her niece, and fully employed in educating the young Cecilia, after her model, in hopes to make her worthy to share the heart of the heir of Trevanion.

Lord Trevanion, by degrees, divested Sir William Edwin of his prejudices, and changed his opposition to the minister, into a patriotic zeal for the good of his country, and the honour of his prince, which he at length convinced him were synonymous terms.

Himself a watchful and independent guardian of the privileges and benefits of the nation at large, and his own county in particular, not urged by prejudice, nor restrained by interested considerations, he either supported or opposed men and measures, as they appeared to have in view the general good; his honour was above price; and his principles secured from temptation by that noble pride, which, scorning obligation, regulated his wishes to his power. Many possessed greater estates; but those whose rent-rolls were ten times larger, were
neither

neither so affluent nor so happy as he; because he was generous, and because he was just; his wife, the fond choice of his early years, is yet the object of his adoration; her beauty, striking as it is, is her least attraction; and her high rank and affluent fortune creates not that respect, which is paid to her excellent heart and refined understanding. Blest with the full gratification of their wishes in the possession of each other, and happy in a beauteous offspring, surrounding, like olive branches, their hospitable board, they yet live, and may they long do so, adored by each other,

Venerated by their Children,

Esteemed by their Friends,

Beloved and honoured by their Country.

F I N I S.

The first of these is the fact that the
 Government has been unable to secure
 the necessary funds to carry out its
 policy of non-interference. This is
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